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WORLD SOCCER

INTERNATIONAL RESULTS AND SCORERS

TRAGEDY IN SOUTH AFRICA

PLAYER PORTRAITS
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SAMMER
BRANCO

AFRICAN WORLD CUP BONANZA

CLUB FOCUS
MILAN

CAMEROON
THE INSIDE STORY

SPOTLIGHT
ENZO SCIFO

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WORLD CUP VICTORY FOR AFRICA

Well worth a place ... Makanaky of Cameroon shows African style in a World Cup clash with Sensini of Argentina.

KEIR RADNEDGE REPORTING

Cameroon success earns extra place in US '94

AFRICA are World Cup-winners already – without a ball having been kicked yet in the United States'94 campaign.

The African victory is FIFA's decision to admit THREE rather than two of the continent's teams to the next finals. The development is the logical step after Morocco's progression to the second round in 1986 and Cameroon's run to the quarter-finals last year in Italy.

But Europe are the losers. FIFA's executive committee, meeting in Zurich, decided that Europe must forfeit a place.

Not only that, but Europe's qualifying process must take in the politically sensitive inclusion of Israel.

Correctly

Europe will thus field 13 nations in the US, including holders Germany, instead of 14. Asia will receive two berths, South America three and North and Central America and the Caribbean one. The winners of the Oceania qualifying group will face the runners-up of the CONCACAF zone. The winners of that duel then take on the fourth-ranked South American side for a place in the finals.

Sepp Blatter, FIFA'S general secretary, confirmed: "These changes reflect what happened in the last two World Cups when the Africans did very well, particularly Cameroon."

But there was no joy for Asia in their bid to increase the number of finalist places from two to three. FIFA correctly decided that no such reward had been earned by the poor displays of South Korea and the United Arab Emirates in Italy.

Blatter said: "The World Cup is a high-level, professional event. Participation must be based on performance, not on geography or demographics."

Other FIFA decisions:

1. All Iraqi teams, both international and club, have been suspended from FIFA competitions because of the political and military situation in the Gulf;

2. Costa Rica have been banned for two years from all age-limit competitions, including the Olympics, for playing over-age players in the 1985 World Youth Cup (the fiddle came to light when Hernan Medford registered his real date of birth for Italia'90);

3. Colombia have been ordered to play all international matches, at national team and club level, away from home "because the security of referees and visiting teams cannot be assured."

FIFA have created a special commission to consider ways of increasing goal-scoring. But fears about rule-tinkering were drastically reduced by the nomination as chairman of the essentially conservative UEFA president Lennart Johansson and the inclusion on the committee of Michel Platini, who has made his views on larger goals acidly clear.

Trying to maintain the credibility of the commission, Blatter said: "The basic problem is to analyse today's football and make it more attractive. Football is an attacking game. But today people play football to protect their own goal. Now we have to go for goals. Football is about getting the ball in the net."

Commission

Blatter set the working group to prepare recommendations by the end of next year. Any suggested rule changes could then be put to the International Board by 1992.

Other members of the unwieldy 29-strong commission will include a current player, a current referee, a club manager, a doctor and a media representative. Remaining members were to be selected by January 15 and the task force will hold their first meeting next month.

The creation of the commission is a clear reaction to American jitters over the image of World Cup football. That was reflected in a letter to FIFA from Alan Rothenberg, the new president of the USSF, demanding more goals to persuade Americans to embrace the sport.

In his letter to FIFA president Joao Havelange, Rothenberg said: "For the sport to take root in the United States as a spectator and television sport, the rules of the game must be changed to permit more goals. We do not advocate any specific rule changes at this time. But we do urge the FIFA executive committee, under your leadership, to authorise experimental efforts to test many of the changes which have been advanced.

"Many of our youth, amateur and professional leagues and teams would be willing to play under the experiment rules to assist such an evaluation."

Brazil and Portugal have formally joined the ranks of prospective hosts for the 1998 World Cup. France, Morocco and Switzerland had already registered their interest.

Tragedy in South Africa

BY JONATHAN SHALLARD

BATTLES between rival fans and a stampede by hundreds more in a panic has produced the worst tragedy in African soccer history.

Some 40 fans were killed and 50 more injured at Orkney in Western Transvaal towards the end of a pre-season "friendly" between arch rivals Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates.

The match was being watched by a 20,000 crowd in the Ernest Oppenheimer stadium when fighting began after a controversial refereeing award of a goal to Kaizer Chiefs.

Police spokesman Johan Mostert said: "Bottle-throwing began, thousands of people stampeded for the gates but many were crushed in the squeeze to get there. The dead includes two children."

It was not immediately obvious which group of fans had started the trouble since both Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates have large followings in the townships around Johannesburg.

A sad sight for soccer ... after Ibrox and Heysel, Bradford and Hillsborough, the corpses are counted at Orkney in Western Transvaal.

Horrific

Initial investigations by the National Soccer League, the sport's overall authority in South Africa, pointed a finger at inadequate security. Apparently rival fans had been able to mix freely, contrary to NSL regulations.

An NSL spokesman said: "The public can rest assured that the guilty parties will be bought to justice and we will do everything in our power to prevent a recurrence of this horrific tragedy."

The following morning NSL chief executive Cyril Kobus and his management commitee inspected stadium debris and spoke to staff and witnesses. Kobus also intended to interview players.

First witnesses said Pirates fans had begun pelting Chiefs supporters with beer cans and other missiles shortly after Chiefs scored, prompting pitched battles among the fans. One photographer said: "The rival fans were throwing cans at each other and some were flashing knives. Other fans were trying to run away from the fighting."

STADIUM DISASTERS

May 24, 1964 – Lima, Peru: Nearly 300 people people are killed and another 500 injured in riots after Argentina beat Peru with a last minute goal.

April 15, 1989 – Hillsborough, Sheffield: 95 are crushed to death at an FA Cup semi-final between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest. Fans were crushed along the riot-control fences as more supportes push in to the ground behind them.

March 12, 1988 – Katmandu, Nepal: 93 are killed and more than 100 injured as fans fleeing a hailstorm stampede into locked exit doors.

Jan 2, 1971 – Ibrox, Glasgow: 66 die and 170 are injured on a stairway at the end of a Rangers v Celtic match.

May 11, 1985 – Bradford: 56 die when a cigarette stub ignites rubbish beneath a wooden stand, which burns within minutes.

Jan 13, 1991 – Orkney, Western Transvaal: 40 are killed, most trampled or crushed along riot-control fences surrounding the pitch, as fans panic and try to escape brawls at the stadium.

May 29, 1985 – Heysel, Brussels: 39 are killed at the Champions' Cup final when fighting breaks out and a wall separating rival fans of England's Liverpool and Italy's Juventus of Turin collapses.

March 10, 1987 – Tripoli, Libya: 20 are killed when panic-stricken fans flee knife-wielding rivals and trigger the collapse of a wall (unreliable Libyan reports claimed only two dead and 16 injured).

Oct 20, 1982 – Moscow: 61 are killed at a European club match between Moscow Spartak and Haarlem of Holland. Police are blamed for pushing fans down a narrow icy staircase before the end of the match. Unconfirmed later reports, in the first flush of glasnost, claimed a death toll of 340.

Thanks, Soccer America

ASSOCIATE Publisher David J. Smith and I spent six great days at the National Soccer Coaches Association of America Convention which was held in Atlanta, Georgia recently.

We meet several old friends like Clive Charles, the former West Ham and Cardiff player now chief coach at Portland University, and made hundreds of new ones.

David and I were impressed with the enthusiasm of the people connected with the game at grass roots level in the States.

There are over 15 million youngsters playing soccer in America and the sport is growing fast.

The organisers of World Cup USA '94 and the United States Soccer Federation are aware of the mammoth task that faces them.

But after speaking to their officials I am convinced USA '94 WILL be the best organised, best supported, most exciting World Cup competition of all.

And I'm not the only one. Don't miss next month's issue which will feature a colour report on the NSCAA Convention and include EXCLUSIVE interviews with England manager Graham Taylor, Scotland manager Andy Roxburgh and Karl Heinz Rummenigge.

★ David Smith and I would like to express special thanks to our friends from SOCCER AMERICA magazine for all their kindness and help during our stay in Atlanta . . . particularly Editor-in-Chief Lynn Berling-Manuel, Editor Paul Kennedy and Circulation/ Promotion chief Beth Ann Bishop.

SOCCER AMERICA, is the nation's leading soccer magazine and has played a major role in helping to promote and develop the game in the States.

Details of how to obtain a regular copy will be featured next month.

PETER STEWART
MANAGING EDITOR

Cameroon avert a strike

CAMEROON come to Wembley for the first time on February 6 under new management.

Valeri Nepomniachi, the Soviet coach who guided them to the quarter-finals of the 1990 World Cup, quit last December when his contract ended – complaining that he had not been paid any of the promised bonuses.

Neither had the players and the financial situation has only recently been sorted out. Cameroon had little option. The foreign-based players were considering refusing to play at Wembley unless they got their money – up to £50,000 in some cases.

Nepomniachi's departure was not a surprise. A significant number of federation officials and players resented the amount of credit he gained for Cameroon's success.

The new manager is Philippe Redon, a 40-year-old Frenchman who has been coaching second division Creteil. Redon had an undistinguished midfield playing career with Rennes and Laval but, significantly, also with Saint-Etienne.

Here he played alongside Roger Milla, the newly re-elected African Footballer of the Year, and a major influence within the Sports Ministry.

Lions or pussycats? – Pages 4-5

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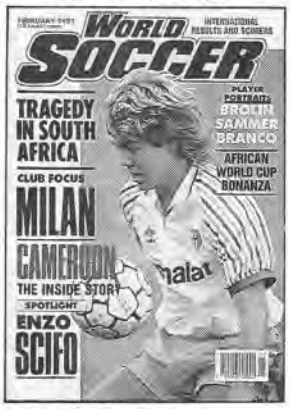

Tomas Brolin of Parma.

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PUSSYCATS!

Lions lose that World Cup sparkle

GRAHAM TURNER looks at the Cameroon scene as the Wembley date approaches

CAMEROON'S visit to Wembley on February 6 is generating a lot of interest – but spectators are unlikely to see a repeat of the defiant stand made by the Africans in last July's World Cup quarter-final against England.

The Indomitable Lions have become pussycats since the glory days of Italia'90, having only three wins, over mediocre opposition, in their last eight outings.

The bickering over the coaching in Italy and the unpaid bonuses has resulted in a new coach and a new-look side making occasional use of European-based professionals, but mostly having eyes on youth and a spot in the Olympic Games finals in Barcelona next year.

The new-look Cameroon made a miserable start to their African Nations Cup qualifying campaign, have been beaten in a friendly international in Europe, and lost their UDEAC Cup title to Congo.

Two draws and only one goal in Group One of the qualifiers for the Nations Cup finals in Senegal next January was not the sort of start expected from the side who can claim to have earned Africa a third berth at the World Cup finals from 1994 on.

Against Mali (home 0-0) and Sierra Leone (away 1-1), slaughter was expected. Instead, it was more like a pat on the head.

Then came a visit to minnows Botswana for a friendly. Just two World Cup party members made it for the shocking 0-0 draw in Gaborone – Victor N'Dip and Jules Ohana, now the captain.

Louis M'Fede, based in the Spanish Second Division with Figueras, and Bertin Ebwelle strengthened the side in Norway, but the Lions were sent home with their tails between their legs after a six-goal thrashing.

Money, of course, is one of the problems facing Cameroon football in general and Ibrahim Mbombo Njoya in particular.

Mbombo Njoya was named Minister for Youth and Sport, for the third time, barely three months after Roger Milla and the others had paraded in triumph through the streets of Douala and Yaounde.

Cameroon's World Cup generated over £1 million in revenue – an almost embarrassingly substantial sum in a poor country where all sport is restricted fairly severely to amateur status.

Complaining

The dust had barely settled after the victory parades when the bickering started. Several of the players complained they had not been paid according to the promises made to them by the Federation (FECAFOOT).

Then the independent press, one of the newcomers as Cameroon slowly edges towards democratic status, began to wonder in public where the World Cup money had gone. Some even accused FECAFOOT of performing vanishing tricks with around £400,000 of the profits

For a while, the authorities played musical chairs around the law courts, but eventually decided there was enough smoke to fire the previous Minister, Joseph Fofe. Then FECAFOOT president Albert Etotokore also was replaced.

By the time Mbombo Njoya began his attempt to make third time lucky, there were palpable signs that a post-Italy rot had set in.

Even more significant than the results was the fact that, for the Mali match, only one World Cup hero returned from Europe to Yaounde: Malaga midfielder Cyrille Makanaky.

He was not happy about being sent off in the first half, and he was even less happy to discover that his only recompense for the long journey was his plane ticket.

Mbombo Njoya was too deft a diplomat to make public declarations of intent. But, off the record, he skilfully outlined the situation and admitted that the fame and fortune generated by the Lions in Italy required a top-level re-think and preliminary moves towards professionalism.

He has set out his stall in a workmanlike fashion. In October he travelled to Europe to consult individually with the top pro exiles. He then persuaded them all to attend a "group therapy" session in Yaounde, rapidly repaired the cracks, and re-established morale, team-spirit and a willingness to cooperate.

Having investigated the bonus gripes, he admitted that the Lions' share hadn't been the lion's share, and promised rapid payment of the missing francs.

In the meantime, he had allowed Soviet coach Valeri Nepomniachi to slip almost unnoticed back to Samarkand when his contract expired on November 30.

In Yaounde, the coach who elsewhere would have been hailed as a national hero was barely mentioned apart from admissions that he was "a nice person".

The new manager is Philippe Redon, a Frenchman who played for nine clubs but, having managed only modest Saint Lo, Creteil and Lens, has never coached at the top.

Redon's task is concisely set out by Bonaventure Djonkep, a rare example of a veteran of the 1982 and 1990 World Cup squads, who has chosen to remain in Cameroon.

He mused: "Everybody wants the national team to win, but it is difficult to find administrators prepared to look for the right formula. We have won a lot of matches but nobody has stopped to ask why. When we lose, suddenly everybody is ready with explanations and accusations.

"We made a ridiculous showing in the African Nations Cup in Algeria and immediately the backchat started. The Minister should have done this or that. FECAFOOT should have done this or that ...

"Then, because we did well in Italy, nobody paused to take stock of the situation. It wasn't until we failed to beat Mali and Sierra Leone that people began to realise the World Cup is now history and changes are necessary."

Another veteran of '82 and '90. Thomas N'Kono is among the Lions fiercely proud of their nation – and claiming this as one of the bases for their success.

But others, starting with Milla, Djonkep, Makanaky and even Mbombo Njoya, are readier to confirm the indelible contrasts of a country rich in extraordinary natural talent, but poor in facilities to exploit it.

"There are no decent facilities for training," says Djonkep, who claims that the Stade Omnisport, the national stadium in Yaounde, is a cornfield.

Across the capital, between the Valley of Death and the suburb of Melen, is the Stade Militaire, a walled-in baked-earth pitch converted into mud and puddles by the rainy season.

This is the home of Tonnerre Yaounde, five-time league champions

Ekeke beats Shilton for Cameroon's second goal against England in the World Cup.

and winners, right here, of the African Cup-Winners' Cup in 1975.

After sampling the five-star training complexes in Italy, the likes of Milla and Tataw returned to train here, where there are no showers or dressing-rooms and where the players have to change for training leaning on each others' shoulders in the few tufts of grass behind one of the rusted metal goals.

The Army, owners of the stadium, sometimes ask them to leave. If there are military parades in the capital, the Tonnerrre squad may find the pitch being used to park assorted tanks and jeeps.

Climbing out of the other side of Yaounde through the suburb of Mvog-Ada, a steep, rain-eroded road leads to the Stade Malien, the training ground of Canon Yaounde, winners of eight leagues and three continental titles.

The sandy pitch has been levelled out of the hillside and is surrounded by rusted skeletons of cars and mud-and-wattle huts, one of which has been adopted as a changing-room.

"Attitudes are gradually changing," admits Tchapnda Collins, central striker for 1990 champions Union Douala. Tchapnda, tall, strongly-built but timidly unused to interviews, is sitting on the sofa in the family's first-floor flat in the Cite Sicam suburb of Douala, where the built-up area is about to give way to exuberant tropical vegetation.

"To begin with, youngsters in Cameroon don't think about money. They play purely for pleasure. It's only when you become successful that you think of translating ability into money.

"Here my only benefit is that the club pay for my education. But a lot of players now dream of going to Europe. If an offer came along, I wouldn't be able to refuse it."

Training

Tchnapnda, Djonkep and their team-mates clinched Union Douala's first title in 12 years after a chaotic stop-start season, interrupted so many times that the 30-match fixture list lasted a full 12 months.

When the remaining teams had disbanded for their holiday, two of the Yaounde clubs, Tonnerre and Prevoyance, carried on training for the climax to the season – the Cup Final.

But with the big match previews already on the news stands came the announcement that the country's top man, President Paul Biya, had gone on holiday to Europe and that the match was off.

Eventually it was played in early December, with Prevoyance winning on penalties and Tonnerre skipper Tataw missing the vital kick.

The amateur status of Cameroon football means that even winning titles brings scant rewards.

Djonkep reckons to earn about £50 a week from football, plus £80-£100 more from his job as a civil servant with the Ministry for Youth and Sport. He says: "There are cases of hardship in football. In a winning team you can pick up around 50,000 francs CFA (approximately £25 per week) in a month. But there are players who are out of work who have to manage on 30,000 (£60) a month, and over half of that can easily go on rent." Djonkep pays £125 a month for three rooms which he shares with his wife, their two children, two of his brothers and one of his wife's brothers.

"I have had the great fortune to play in the national team and my bonus for the World Cup has allowed me to buy a Toyota Sunny. Normally if you want a new car you have to steal one."

His comments throw light on rumours that certain players had tried to edge into the World Cup squad by offering bribes to the coaching staff!

'Some have gold, some have oil – we have soccer'

WITH typical warmth and hospitality, Dr. Omer Ngewa, president of champions Union Douala, and one of his vice-presidents, Philippe Kouamedjo, opened the doors on the AGM of regional supporters clubs.

The room was packed with fans as the dynamic, forward-thinking Dr. Ngewa asked: "Is it right that when a foreign reporter asks for the club's HQ, they should have to direct him to my printing works?

"is it right that we have to share our training ground with an inferior team? (Unite). Is it right that a club like ours with a million supporters should have the same financial problems as clubs which have nobody?"

Even winning the title generates more financial headaches. Dr. Ngewa predicted that taking part in the African Champions' Cup would mean doubling the annual budget of £75,000.

Clubs in Cameroon are also so used to losing top players to Europe that Dr. Ngewa told, almost with pride, how the champions' stars Mbang Penda and Ewane Dipoko were settling well with Le Havre and Nancy.

Just before the players, led by international goalkeeper William Andem, made their triumphant entry, squares of green paper were distributed among the fans. This was their invitation to help by writing their names on the paper and folding it round money.

Contributions ranged from 5p donated by "an unemployed person" to 80p "for the acquisition of new players"; £70 from a colonel; and £100 from a director.

Kicking

The shortfall in cash, facilities and organisation sum up what Tommy N'Kono would call the negative side. The positive side is all about footballers.

"It is not down to facilities," says Tchapnda Collins. "We have none. It is nothing to do with people giving us lessons in technique or tactics, because nobody does. In Cameroon we are simply born with an obsession for football."

The obsession is in evidence on every scrap of spare land.

Cyrille Makanaky, now with Malaga, enthuses about a tournament played before an audience of thousands on a drawing-room-sized pitch between the fire station and the cemetery in the Ngodi district. In a society as yet untouched by video games, the kids invest every spare second in street games.

"I started in exactly the same way as every other boy," says Roger Milla. "Kicking a ball around the streets – and when I say a ball, sometimes it was a stone wrapped in banana leaves or even a grapefruit or a pineapple wrapped in rags.

"I reckon it gives you an advantage when you come to play with a real ball. It seems easier to control."

Bonaventure Djonkep says: "Learning your football in the street means that you pick up habits which are later almost impossible to correct.

"For example, my heading has always been very strange. As a kid I never met the ball fair and square on my forehead. I could only seem to direct the ball with one side of my head. If the ball didn't arrive on my 'good' side, I was lost."

Cyrille Makanaky describes his transformation from street-game hopeful into Indomitable Lion, and adds: "If you're good, people or relatives might mention your name to a club president. If they like you, maybe you move into the Third Division, which is organised by FECAFOOT.

Roger Milla with his special award as Most Entertaining Player during Italia '90.

Being

"I started at Vent Douala, then moved into the Second Division with Coupe Club and I had to do a 'Go West Young Man' to make my debut in the First with Unisport Bafang.

"That's when I stopped being typical, because I went to France to study electro-mechanics.

"At college the teacher told me I was good enough to play league football and I went to a Fourth Division club, La Foret, where I played for six months. Then it was Ajaccio in the Second Division, and then Toulon in the First."

For Makanaky and Djonkep, the lack of coaching generates long-term benefits. "All right, there is a lot to improve in Cameroon," says Makanaky. "But we need to do the right things, or we risk losing the character and spontaneity of our game.

"I've seen what happens in France. There are soccer schools everywhere, but all the youngsters end up like peas in a pod. They are all taught the same."

Djonkep says: "As a P.E. teacher I take care to encourage young players to develop the things they do best, to express themselves."

The Tonnerre Yaounde coach Emmanuel Ambane, a P.E. graduate from Leipzig University says: "Youngsters rely on recommendations from friends or even writing letters to the newspapers to join the top clubs like ours.

"We place a lot of importance on our youth scheme but we lack the facilities to do much individual coaching.

"We find that the youngsters who join us are technically gifted and maybe the top priority is to instil some team spirit, teach them to become valuable team members."

Ambane and other coaches in Cameroon earn between £25 and £50 per week for their troubles. They need full-time jobs to survive, and most training sessions are scheduled for their lunch hour.

Makanaky comments: "There are players and coaches who have a job or study. But there are others who have neither one nor the other. They have to live off their win bonuses – and pro football doesn't necessarily mean big wages.

"Workers can earn £100 a month, so why not pay a footballer that as well?"

Working

Other African countries sharing Cameroon's social and financial backdrop are not as good as the Indomitable Lions. Why not?

"Moral strength," says Djonkep. "In our country, if two men argue, each is determined to win and the loser will not accept being beaten.

"He may not sleep at night because he is working out how he can come out on top.

"There is a fierce rivalry between certain regions, but there is also a fierce pride in being from Cameroon. When the Indomitable Lions play, they know they have the backing of ten million people."

Milla says: "Other countries may be socially similar to ours, but they don't seem to have the same depth of talent.

"Our youngsters are exceptionally gifted and they are strong. What's more, they grow up expressing themselves and enjoying their football. Now, thanks to the Lions, they have the confidence to succeed in the world."

The last words came from Makanaky: "Some countries have gold. Others have oil. In Cameroon we have football."

Cup shock for the Congo

CONGO'S victory in the UDEAC Cup – contested by members of the customs and economic union of central Africa – was their first since the tournament began in 1984.

Their 2-1 win over Cameroon in Brazzaville ensures them of a place in the All-Africa Games in Egypt next year.

The UDEAC event is usually only a stroll in the park for Cameroon, but this time they were dethroned by a better team.

Congo's N'Gapy scored his sixth goal of the tournament after only three minutes in the final, and veteran Makita added a second near half-time.

Ebwelle replied after nine minutes of the second half, but Congo held on to win.

MARK GLEESON

BY SIMON KUPER

The leader at last

Van Basten takes the Cruyff role

RUUD GULLIT crossed from the right. Marco Van Basten, his back to goal, caught the ball on one foot, let it bounce once, and unleashed a bicycle kick that beat Malta's goalkeeper John Cluett from 20 yards. It was the kind of goal people will talk about for years.

Yes, Van Basten agreed afterwards, that was a good goal, but not his best of the match. Of the five he scored in Holland's 8-0 victory, his favourite was the one he took out of mid-air with his left foot when the cross came behind him and to his right. That time Cluett, flabbergasted, never got round to diving.

It's no exaggeration to say that Van Basten has become a different man over the past few months. The captain's armband he wore for most of Holland's last two internationals symbolises the change.

The youth who sulked through the World Cup because his mentor, Johan Cruyff, had not been asked to manage Holland, now takes responsibility for the team's strategy and encourages his lesser teammates.

In Italy last summer, his arrogance was such that Dutch substitutes were afraid to speak to him. But now Ruud Gullit, formerly the face of Holland, is keeping quiet and playing a subservient role as right-half while he slowly returns from injury, and Van Basten is the team leader.

The new Van Basten was the man who persuaded Holland's manager, Rinus Michels, to drop his boring and unsuccessful defensive system and to field two wingers instead. The result was dazzling Dutch displays against Greece and Malta and a goal difference of 10-0 over the two matches.

The way Van Basten played against Malta, he could have scored five against Germany or Italy. After the disaster of Italia'90, when he was the tournament's greatest flop, he is determined that his team should retain the European title.

Holland's goal difference almost certainly means that they need only finish level on points with Portugal to win their qualifying group and go to Sweden.

Legends

In all, 1990 was a very good year for Van Basten – with the exception of four well-publicised matches at the World Cup. After all he won the European Cup, the Supercup and the World Club Cup with Milan. He was the highest scorer in the Italian League over the calendar year, as he was in 1989. Remember that his rivals include Schillaci, Careca, Baggio, Klinsmann and Maradona.

As the boy Van Basten wrote on his school desk: "There's nobody better than me, apart from me." But as he well knows, the arena where legends are made is the World Cup. Van Basten's disappointment about his failure there cannot be overstated.

Beware world: Van Basten already is looking forward to 1994. He hopes and expects that Holland will travel to the next World Cup with his friend Cruyff as manager. Despite an age difference of 17 years, Van Basten and the Barcelona boss are the closest of comrades.

Cruyff has said he would like to take Holland to the USA. The two often seem to respect only each other. And their friendship has shaped Van Basten's current development: he is turning into a second Cruyff.

"Johan was ahead of me, telling other players what to do when he was just 17," says Van Basten. "Now, at 26, I've finally reached that stage. Maybe when I'm 32 I'll be as far as Cruyff was at 25."

Cruyff's was the brain behind the system with two wingers that Van Basten has forced on Michels. The system is the one Cruyff introduced at Ajax from 1985, and more than half the Dutch side are Ajax players.

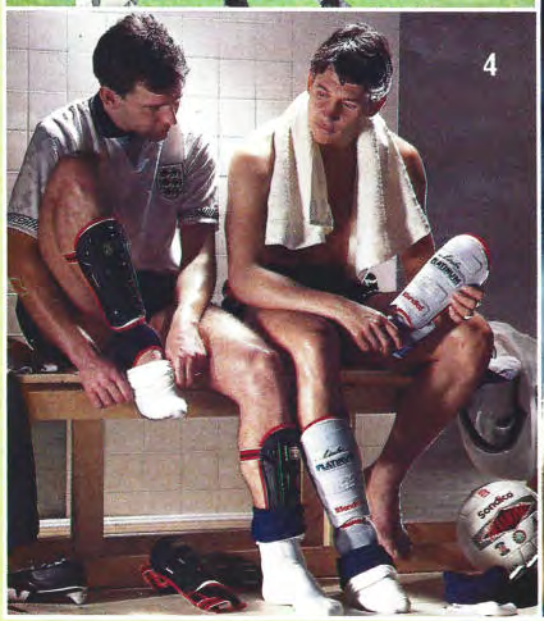
Van Basten was Cruyff's captain at Ajax. When Van Basten advocates attacking football you can hear Cruyff talking: "You mustn't be afraid to fall on your face. If you don't dare to make mistakes, you'll never shine," the young captain argues.

Michels feels safer with the mind-numbing defensive football that ruined the World Cup.

Van Basten is following Cruyff in another way: he wants to move from centre-forward to midfield, as Cruyff did in mid-career.

"Marco is the best player, but playing up front he is dependent on others to give him the ball," says Cruyff. "It is wrong that the best should be dependent." Van Basten, as skilful and intelligent as anyone in the game, can set up as well as he can score, as he showed when he best two defenders in two yards to give Dennis Bergkamp an easy goal against Malta.

When Guido Buchwald is one of the stars of the World Cup, you need Van Basten to remind you that football is indeed the beautiful game.



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MILAN

BY KEIR RADNEDGE

MARVELLOUS MILAN SILENCE THE CRITICS

MILAN, said the critics as they tiptoed past Benfica in last year's Champions' Cup Final, are on the slide.

The chorus was duly repeated as Milan suffered the inglorious reflection of Holland's sad exit from the World Cup finals – a team relying on the Milan trio of Ruud Gullit, Marco Van Basten and Frank Rijkaard defeated in their own adopted home of the Stadio Meazza at San Siro by West Germany.

Yet again the snipers were in evidence as Milan stuttered past Club Brugge when they began their defence of the Champions' Cup. A good job, sneered Inter fans, that Milan had a bye through the first round.

And yet, a matter of a few months later, no better team exists in the world.

Milan are quarter-finalists in the Champions' Cup; Milan hold the European Supercup; Milan became, last December, the first European team in 25 years to retain the World Club Cup; Milan have won more international competitive events than any other club – 11 titles compared with Real Madrid's nine.

More than that: against Olimpia of Paraguay in the World Club clash in Tokyo, Milan laid on their best all-round performance since their Champions' Cup defeat of Real Madrid more than a year earlier.

The Milan on duty in Tokyo was exactly the team who had once excited Sebastiao Lazaroni, then manager of Brazil, to say: "Thank goodness Milan cannot play in the World Cup. No-one else would stand a chance." The fact that Milan then went on to finish domestic runners-up in both league and cup last term was no disgrace.

Anything but. Instead, the Rossoneri (Red-and-blacks) had done remarkably well considering that Van Basten had missed the first seven games of the season because of injury (and yet ended as the league's 19-goal top scorer) and Gullit missed almost all the season.

Milan are one of the all-time greats of world football. They have been world club champions three times (in 1969, 1989 and 1990), European champions four times (in 1963, 1969, 1989 and 1990), Cup-winners' Cup holders twice (in 1968 and 1973), European Supercup winners twice (1989 and 1990), Italian champions 11 times and domestic cup-winners on four occasions.

There have also been occasional black marks.

One was their enforced relegation in the early 1970s after president Felice Colombo and goalkeeper Enrico Albertosi were found to have fixed matches on behalf of the Totonero – the illegal pools syndicates. After several years of boardroom chaos, bankruptcy loomed. Yet even here was the most golden of linings in the most threatening of clouds.

A takeover by media magnate Silvio Berlusconi, initially, saved Milan from humiliation. But Berlusconi was not intent on merely rescuing Milan, he turned the club around.

A £20million investment paid off all the debts and financed the acquisitions of Gullit, Van Basten and Rijkaard. Berlusconi's instant reward was Milan's thrilling league title triumph at the end of the 1987-88 season, when they overtook Napoli, Diego Maradona's defending title-holders, on the run-in.

It was like the American Civil War – a confrontation between North and South. Once again, the North came out on top.

As Gullit pulled the strings; as Van Basten came back from injury in decisive support; as old-stager Pietro Paolo Virdis grabbed vital goals, so Napoli saw their grip on the league leadership threatened seriously for the first time in two seasons.

Napoli allowed Milan to overtake them when Gullit and Co won the Match of the Season by 3-2 in front of a jam-packed 74,000 stunned tifosi in the Stadio San Paolo. An apparently impregnable lead had been obliterated.

Milan had also had to overcome a disciplinary committee defeat, when a 1-0 home victory over Roma was turned into 2-0 defeat because Roma keeper Tancredi had been felled by a firework.

At one stage Napoli had been five

Tackling ... Baresi of Milan clashes with Maradona in a match against Napoli.

Triumphant ... the Milan squad after their victory over Olimpia of Paraguay.

Superb ... Milan's home, the Stadio Meazza. Stopped ... Gullit brought down by Ferrara of Napoli.

Scorer ... Van Basten, top marksman in Italy last season, despite missing the first seven matches.

points clear. By the time the rivals met in the San Paolo that lead had been cut to one point. Virdis shot Milan ahead only for Maradona to equalise just before half-time with one of his famous free-kicks. But in the second half Milan gained in confidence and began to wrest control of not only the match but the championship.

Gullit set up both the all-important goals. First he crossed towards Van Basten and though the other Dutchman could not reach the ball, Virdis did. The third goal was scored by Van Basten. He was ready and waiting this time for Gullit's cross. Careca pulled a goal back for Napoli but it was too late.

The following season, however, the winds of doubt changed direction in northern Italy, blowing a typical San Siro fog of uncertainty clear away from neighbours Internazionale to envelop Milan instead.

Arrigo Sacchi, the championship-winning coach who had been fished out of the obscurity of second division Parma by Berlusconi, had for months been the cleancut hero, the good guy representative of all the positive new developments in Calcio. Suddenly he was deemed mortal after all and under attack. But there was little he could do. Milan were paying the price for a most disruptive string of injuries, with Gullit the most serious casualty.

Basically, Gullit had been paying the price for carrying a leg injury through the European championships. He did not have the necessary rest during that summer of 1988 and reached the end of the year having started only a handful of league matches.

Invested

Other injuries forced Sacchi to gamble on young players and positional and tactical experiments. That meant defeats which, in turn, sapped confidence. Not just in the team but in the boardroom.

Berlusconi let it be known he had not invested more than £20million in Milan to see the team totter along in mid-table. On certain issues the two men had never seen eye to eye but these did not matter while Milan were winning. Now they assumed greater significance.

Berlusconi was peeved when Sacchi insisted on Milan releasing the Argentine, Claudio Borghi, as well as the versatile and industrious Daniele Massaro. Then delight with Marco Van Basten's election as European Footballer of the Year was tempered by concern that Rijkaard was proving slow to adapt to Calcio.

Sweeping defeat of Real Madrid in the 1989 Champions' Cup semi-finals and then of Steaua Bucharest in the final dispelled all those doubts. But when you are at the top of the tree, the vultures are never far away – only too eager to peck away at any hint of weakness.

That's why it was not merely Milan's victory over Olimpia in Tokyo which was significent, but the manner of their success.

Winning is a habit and confidence, at the highest level, is a valuable weapon. Certainly it is one with which Marseille, champions of France, will hardly be able to challenge Sacchi's supremos next month.

TURN OVER

Continued from previous page

THE COACH

Arrigo SACCHI. Aged 44 (born April 1, 1946) – but no-one's fool, as he demonstrated by guiding Milan to the Italian championship at the end of his first season in charge and the Champions' Cup at the end of his second and third. Sacchi made no impact as a player and was working in a shoe factory when he decided to launch his coaching career in charge of the Cesena youth team in 1977. He qualified from the Coverciano coaching centre that same year and was appointed to his first senior post with third division Rimini in 1982. In 1985 he took over Parma, who had just been relegated to the third division. They were promoted back into the second division at first attempt. Then, at the start of the 1986-87 season, Parma surprisingly knocked out Milan in the Italian cup. Milan president Silvio Berlusconi decided Sacchi was the man for Milan and he succeeded Roma-bound Nils Liedholm in the summer of 1987. Sacchi, married with two daughters, was a fervent admirer of Johan Cruyff's Dutch team of the 1970s and has been a prime mover in bringing positive, attacking attitudes back to the Italian game.

THE SQUAD

Andrea PAZZAGLI. Goalkeeper. Aged 31 (born January 18, 1960). Signed two years ago from Ascoli, for whom he was a 34-game ever-present in the first division in 1988-89. Pazzagli played 23 league games for Milan last term, his form facilitating the sale of ex-international Giovanni Galli to Napoli last summer.

Sebastiano ROSSI. Goalkeeper. Aged 26 (born July 20, 1964).
Summer signing from Cesena, who had discovered him in 1981. Rossi had loan spells out with Forli, Empoli and RM Firenze before establishing himself back with Cesena in the 1986-87 second division promotion season.

Massimo TAIBI. Goalkeeper. Aged 20 (born February 18, 1970). Summer signing from third division Trento.

Stefano CAROBBI. Fullback. Aged 27 (born January 16, 1964).
Signed two years ago from Fiorentina, his only previous club, and for whom he had been a first division regular for the previous four years.

Paolo MALDINI. Left back. Aged 22 (born June 26, 1968) with 28 caps.
Italy's World Cup third-place-winning left back. Son of Cesare Maldini, who was Milan's European Cup-winning captain against Benfica at Wembley in 1963 and who is now aide to national boss Azeglio Vicini. Maldini junior made his Milan debut away to Udinese in January, 1985, at the age of 16.

Mauro TASSOTTI. Fullback. Aged 31 (born January 19, 1960).
One of the most experienced defenders in the squad. Born in Rome where he made his name with Lazio, for whom he made his first division debut at 18. Transferred to Milan in 1980 and has now played more than 250 league games in the red-and-black stripes. Many Milan fans cannot understand why he was not given a chance to force his way into Italy's World Cup squad.

Filippo GALLI. Centre back/stopper. Aged 27 (born May 19, 1963). One of the few local boys in the squad. Promoted through the Milan youth ranks, was loaned out to third division Pescara to gain experience for a season, and then recalled as a first-team regular in 1983. He is the only surviving ever-present from Milan's corner-turning 1988 championship-winning side.

Franco BARESI. Sweeper. Aged 30 (born May 8, 1960) with 49 caps. Club captain and one of the most influential players not only in the Italian league but in international football. Highly rated for many years but his career was continually interrupted by injuries and his international opportunities were restricted by the dominance of Gaetano Scirea (who was tragically killed a few months ago in a car crash in Poland). Made his Italy debut in a goalless draw against Rumania in Florence in December, 1982 and in the last four years has established himself as one of the finest – and most influential – defenders in the world game.

Alessandro COSTACURTA. Utility defender. Aged 24 (born April 24, 1966). Milan product recalled to HQ in 1987 after a season out on loan with Monza in the third division. Italy manager Azeglio Vicini had considered giving Costacurta his national team debut early last year against Holland. He changed his mind, however, when Baresi was forced to pull out by illness and that bad luck may just have cost Costacurta a World Cup place.

Gian Domenico COSTI. Defender. Aged 21 (born March 10, 1969). Summer signing from third division Modena.

Stefano NAVA. Stopper. Aged 21 (born February 19, 1969).
Local-born defender who was recalled last summer after a loan season with second division Reggiana.

Frank RIJKAARD. Sweeper/midfield. Aged 28 (born September 30, 1962) with 45 caps (three goals) for Holland. Subject of endless controversy last year. First came his expulsion at the end of the last league season which cost him a four-game ban; then came his World Cup expulsion for the ugly spitting incident with Rudi Voeller of West Germany; then came his decision to quit the Dutch national team. Rijkaard, one of the most skilled and versatile players in the world game, is no stranger to controversy. At Ajax, where he began, he fell out with coach Johan Cruyff and went on strike. Later he was shuffled within a matter of months before Ajax, Sporting Lisbon and Zaragoza before finally ending up at Milan in the summer of 1988 (It is said that he and Gullit are no longer the best of friends).

Carlo ANCELOTTI. Midfield. Aged 31 (born June 10, 1959) with 25 caps. His career has been dogged by bad luck. Injuries caused him to miss the 1982 World Cup finals, the 1984 Champions' Cup Final against Liverpool (when with Roma) and then virtually halted his World Cup bid last summer after Italy's first game against Austria. Ancelotti did at least return to duty for the Third Place victory over England. The other players missed his influence badly in between. Sampdoria star Vialli said: "Ancelotti is like our trainer on the pitch. When he retires he will have a brilliant career as a coach."

Alberigo EVANI. Midfield. Aged 28 (born January 1, 1963). A one-club man, having joined Milan as a 15-year-old and made his league debut in a goalless draw against Bologna in 1981, when still only 18. Evani makes a habit of scoring important goals.
For instance, last season Evani scored title-winning goals both in the European Supercup against Barcelona and in the world club cup against Atletico Nacional; this season he scored Milan's goal in their 1-1 first leg draw with Sampdoria in the 1990 European Supercup.

Roberto DONADONI. Midfield/wing. Aged 27 (born September 9, 1963) with 36 caps. Missed last season's European Cup final because of a three-match ban inflicted by UEFA after his expulsion for retaliation in the quarter-final second leg against Mechelen. Donadoni joined Milan from Atalanta in 1986 and his deep-lying winger role was a key factor in their domestic and international successes. Made his Italy debut against Greece in Bologna in October, 1986, and was superb in the 1988 European championship finals and last summer's World Cup (though he missed the Third Place Play-off). Donadoni was at the centre of a dramatic incident in the Champions' Cup second round tie against Red Star in Belgrade three years ago when he swallowed his tongue and the Red Star doctor had to break his jaw to free his air passage!

Rijkaard ... controversial figure who has quit international football but is still vital to his club.

Donadoni ... superb in the 1987 Europe Championships and just as good in the 1990 World Cup.

Rudi Dil "Ruud" GULLIT. Midfield/attack. Aged 28 (born September 1, 1962) with 50 caps (14 goals) for Holland. Played only two league matches at the end of last season after almost a year out of action because of knee trouble. Gullit played in the World Cup but was clearly badly short of match fitness. He has played regularly for Milan this season so far and his equaliser in the 88th minute against Napoli earlier this term was his first league goal in more than 19 months. Gullit was the 1987 European Footballer of the Year (courtesy of France Football) and World Player of the Year (courtesy World Soccer). He remains one of the most distinguished and distinctive players in the game – with his dreadlocks and his all-round skills (His wife, Yvonne, recently obtained a £9,000-a-month divorce settlement partly on the grounds that she had provided the idea that he should adopt the Rastafarian look). Father is from Surinam, mother from Holland and Gullit was born in Amsterdam. Played as a teenager for Meerboys and DWS before making a league breakthrough under Barry Hughes at Haarlem. Moved on to Feyenoord and PSV before joining Milan for a world record £6million in 1987. Duly inspired their thrilling championship and Champions' Cup-winning campaigns. Made his Holland debut in a 2-1 defeat by Switzerland in Zurich in September, 1981. Was a controversial figure in Holland's 1988 European championship success – sacrificing his individualistic style to the needs of the tactics laid down by manager Rinus Michels. Gullit was then very nearly lost to football because of a knee injury suffered accidentally in the 1989 European semi-final against Real Madrid. Keyhole surgery brought him back in time for the final against Steaua in which he scored twice and was inspirational. But he needed two further operations and almost a year's rest before returning to action at the end of last term.

Daniele MASSARO. Midfield/forward. Aged 29 (born on May 23, 1961). Began with home-town club Monza, spent five years with Fiorentina then joined Milan in the summer of 1986. Initially Sacchi did not rate him and allowed him to go on loan to Roma in the autumn of 1988. But he was one of Roma's few consistent performers in the 1988-89 season. Milan immediately recalled him, he has scored a string of vital goals and been a tremendous support to Van Basten up front. Massaro often plays as the "decoy" centre forward with Van Basten "in the hole."

Angelo CARBONE. Midfield. Aged 22 (born March 23, 1968).
Summer signing from Bari, for whom he scored one goal in 26 games last season.

Stefano SALVATORI. Midfield. Aged 23 (born December 29, 1967). Began with Milan then recalled in 1989 after loan spells with Parma and Fiorentina.

Giovanni STROPPA. Forward. Aged 23 (born January 24, 1968).
Milan youth product who was loaned out for two years to Monza.
Milan were going to leave him there but decided at the last minute, with doubts growing over Gullit, to recall him to HQ two years ago.

Massimo AGOSTINI. Forward. Aged 27 (born January 19, 1964).
Summer signing from Cesena, for whom he was top scorer last season with 11 goals in 27 games. Had been discovered by Cesena as a 17-year-old and had two years with Roma in 1986-88, returning to Cesena after scoring just six goals in 40 games.

Marco SIMONE. Forward. Aged 22 (born January 7, 1969).
Bought two years ago from Como.

Marco VAN BASTEN. Centre forward. Aged 26 (born October 31, 1964) with 42 caps (21 goals) for Holland. The 1989 European Footballer of the Year – and also one of the most injury-prone. Top scorer in Italy last season with 19 goals, despite missing the first seven matches because of tendonitis, but was then a massive disappointment at the World Cup finals. His poor form was all the more surprising because, in Gullit's absence, Van Basten had risen brilliantly to the challenge of inspiring Milan's revival after a slow start to the season. He was outstanding in the defeat of Real Madrid in the autumn of 1989, matching the form he had shown in the 1988 European championship. In those finals Van Basten scored five magnificent, decisive goals, including a hat-trick against England, the semi-final winner against West Germany and the remarkable clinching goal against the Soviet Union in the Final. Yet Van Basten had spent six months of the previous season on the sidelines because of an ankle injury suffered soon after his £1.5million arrival at Milan from Ajax Amsterdam. This season Van Basten has been back near his best – starring against Olimpia in the World Club Final and scoring five times for Holland in the 8-0 European championship thrashing of Malta.

HAPPY RETURN

'Old man' Bossis stars again

BY NICK BIDWELL

THE tall, dark Racing Paris defender posed for a commemorative photograph, received a bouquet, turned and strode off Toulouse's Stade Municipal pitch, thus breaking away from the professional ranks he had graced for 16 exemplary years.

That was in May 1989 and Maxime Bossis – the most-capped player in French history – was making a characteristically low-key farewell after an illustrious career crammed with 76 full internationals, two World Cup semi-finals, a 1984 European Championship triumph, and three league titles and a French Cup win with Nantes.

Yet just 18 months since "retiring", Bossis has reneged on plans for a quiet life. He now leads a youthful Nantes side.

Interminable headlines of financial chicanery have afflicted Gallic football of late, so the return of "le grand Max" has not been considered very sensational by French sports editors.

But the switch came as a complete shock to those who knew Bossis as an essentially shy man who was never totally reconciled to the glare of the media spotlight, and who often expressed his desire to spend more time with his family.

Back in 1983 he opened his heart during a television interview: "I do not want to be misunderstood. I am not complaining nor am I unhappy. But football today is extremely stressful and one has to make sacrifices both physically and in terms of the family.

"A career as a professional football is not a pretext to stop living between the ages of 18 and 32.

"With the European competitions, the French national team, the domestic scene and various training camps, the seasons now seem to run into each other and I hardly have time to breathe.

"On occasion I have longed to be injured and take two or three weeks off. It might be awful to admit that, but it is the truth."

So why had 35-year-old Bossis made a dramatic comeback just a year after hanging up his boots with a certain degree of relish?

Max Bouyer, the Nantes president, was looking for an experienced sweeper, but was unable to recruit one in France or elsewhere. "He thought of me at the last minute and called me," Bossis explains. "At first I thought it was a joke, but very quickly he found the words to make me take him seriously.

Fitness

"I considered the proposition and gave my agreement within three days. After all, I know the club and the region well and I did not have to move house. I must be more attached to Nantes than I thought.

"During pre-season training I suffered a great deal to compensate for my year of inactivity. I was frightened that I would not be quick enough but progressively my speed has returned and now my match fitness is at the same level it was in my last year with Racing.

"Up to now I have no regrets about returning to the game and I am reasonably pleased with my form and the team's results. I just hope that Nantes can consistently rediscover their good football of a few years ago."

President Bouyer believes that the influence of ex-international Bossis on a largely home-grown side can help to restore the Canaries to the position of predominance they shared with Saint-Etienne during the seventies and early eighties.

Already they are exhibiting signs of having the potential to end their barren period – their last league title was in 1983.

Nantes have lost their star Argentinian playmaker, Jorge Burruchaga, to his third major knee operation in as many seasons, but with Bossis proving to be the steadying figure of old at the back, and youthful defenders Thierry Bonalair and Marcel Dessailly and midfielder Paul Le Guen maturing nicely, they could feel justifiably satisfied with a top-six placing at the winter break, with games in hand.

As long ago as 1977, Bossis was a highly-valued component in a decidedly fresh-faced Nantes outfit – including fellow internationals Thierry Tusseau, Eric Pecout, Loic Amisse and Bruno Baronchelli – who ran away with the national title, finishing nine points ahead of Lens.

Some 14 years on, "Max" is reluctant to make comparisons between today's generation and the exceptional class of '77, but he admits that the latest Nantes vintage lacks the consistency of which champions are made.

"In a home win over Monaco and an impressive draw with Marseille, we showed we could live with the best," he says. "But defeats by Toulon and Nancy prove that our youngsters still have much to learn in terms of maintaining their concentration and eliminating glaring individual errors."

Sceptical voices within the French media have claimed that the Bossis return was motivated by a series of failed investment ventures, but he replies: "One cannot stop people talking, or make a decision which is accepted by everybody.

"All I could do was to take into account my own feelings, not those of the critics.

"Bordeaux and certain other teams made offers superior to that of Nantes. In no way was this a decision based on financial considerations.

"I know some people are waiting for me to slip, but at my age failure does not concern me. I'm just happy to play football again."

Bossis (left in the top photograph) is happy to be back in the game. Bonalair (left) is maturing, but Burruchaga (right) has had his third knee operation in three seasons.

SWISS HOPES LEAN ON STIELIKE'S FAITH

INTERNATIONAL ANALYSIS
BY KEIR RADNEDGE

ULI STIELIKE has never been a man to mask his emotions.

In a feisty top-level playing career at Borussia Monchengladbach and Real Madrid he never suffered fools gladly as team-mates. Stielike it was who, at half-time in the 1982 World Cup Final, reputedly turned on manager Jupp Derwall, pointed at half-fit skipper Kalle Rummenigge and said: "Playing him is costing us the match!"

Stielike was not, then, the obvious choice for manager of Switzerland when the post fell vacant nearly two years ago. His short-fuse style might well kick some life into the moribund Swiss national team. But the effect on Stielike of working in what remains a nation of part-time players threatened to be counter-productive.

When Stielike was banned by UEFA after his touchline antics during last autumn's Hampden defeat by Scotland, the difference between the man and his men was thrown into sharp relief.

Stielike fumes that the Swiss have grown so used to losing big matches that the idea of striving to beat the odds never occurs to them.

Introduced

It's almost as if providing the HQ of both FIFA, in Zurich, and UEFA, in Bern, matters more within the Swiss soccer hierarchy than success out on the pitch. Such an attitude is all the more disappointing considering that football is recorded in the country back in the 1860s. Indeed, after the English had introduced the game, the Swiss proved eager secondary pioneers.

Their football missionaries had much to do with the development of football in northern Italy, at Milan in particular, while it was a Swiss, Hans Gamper, who founded Spanish giants Barcelona.

The oldest surviving club are St Gallen, a sort of Swiss Notts County and whose best-known player of recent years was the Poland World Cup defender, Jerzy Gorgon. More recently they provided, briefly, a home for the Italian World Cup veteran Marco Tardelli, seeking a quiet retreat after an Italian career which ended amid domestic problems.

Grasshopper, the best-known Swiss club on account of their picturesque name, were founded by the English in 1886, though it is their neighbours, FC Zurich, who have probably achieved more in Europe – twice having been semi-finalists in the Champions' Cup.

The Swiss FA was founded in 1895 and a league introduced in 1897. The first official international followed in 1905, a year after Switzerland had become one of FIFA's founding members (though the HQ was then in Paris, not Zurich).

Despite the country's multi-lingual make-up, football domination has been Swiss-German through Grasshopper and FC Zurich and Young Boys of Bern. Only Servette, from "French" Geneva, and more recently Neuchatel Xamax, have challenged that supremacy with much success. And the "Italian" clubs have achieved next to nothing.

In 1924 Switzerland reached the Olympic Games final in Paris only to lose 3-0 to the explosive and emergent Uruguayans.

Their clubs took part sporadically in the Mitropa Cup – the 1930s forerunner of today's European tournaments – and in 1934 and 1938 Switzerland qualified for the finals of the World Cup in Italy and in France. In 1938 Switzerland surprised everybody by preparing for the finals with a 2-1 win over England in a friendly, then by defeating Greater Germany 4-2 in a World Cup first round replay – hitting back from 2-0 down.

Devised

Switzerland owed much of their success either side of the second world war to Karl Rappan, an Austrian and a shrewd manager and tactician who devised the Swiss Bolt defensive system, also known as the Verrou (and turned into catenaccio by the Italians).

In 1950 Switzerland reached the World Cup finals in Brazil and then, in 1954, played hosts – beating Italy before losing 7-5 to Austria in an astonishing quarter-final. Switzerland are now applying to FIFA to stage the 1998 World Cup finals, though it's hard to imagine public opinion taking very favourably to the idea of thousands of Italian, German, Dutch and English fans tramping up and down the mountains.

After the 1954 finals Rappan retired and with him went Swiss delusions of grandeur. They missed out in 1958 and, though Rappan returned to guide the Swiss through a West Berlin play-off victory over Sweden and on to Chile, they were eliminated in the first round of the finals of 1962. The same fate awaited them in 1966 – morale flagging after three stars were dropped for breaking curfew on the eve of their first match, which they then lost 5-0 to West Germany.

Since then the Swiss have failed to progress beyond the qualifying stages of either the World Cup or the European Championship. This has not, however, meant a rapid turnover in national managers. For better or worse, the Swiss accepted the limitations of modest domestic talent.

When England beat Switzerland 2-1 at Wembley in 1980, the Swiss manager was Leon Walker, a sort of local Ron Greenwood. He resigned at the end of the year after a disastrous South American tour which took his record in charge to 11 defeats in 16 games.

Walker was replaced by Paul Wolfisberg, an architect by profession and who had been joint chief coach to Luzern for three years.

Wolfisberg brought some stability to the national team – on one occasion during his spell in charge the Swiss started two successive matches with the same team for the first time in five years. But Wolfisberg hated the media pressure which built up around international occasions and grew impatient too with some of the FA's internal politics.

A 1-1 home draw against Norway in November, 1985, was Wolfisberg's 50th match in charge and also his last (during that spell). He resigned, to be replaced by the former international winger, Daniel Jeandupeux.

Under Jeandupeux (or Jean-veux-plus as some of his more critical players nicknamed him) Switzerland failed to rise above their standard mediocrity – despite the emergence of reliable long-distance men such as sweeper Alain Geiger and record, international Heinz Hermann.

The problem is that, since injury enforced the premature retirement of Claudio Sulser four years ago they have had no-one to put the ball in the net. That was what sunk Jeandupeux as well as Wolfisberg, who returned as caretaker before Stielike's appointment in the summer of 1989.

Stielike bases his hopes on suggestions that Switzerland, at last, do possess some bite up front through Kubilay Turkyilmaz, Bologna's recent aqcuisition from Servette, and Stephane Chapuisat – promising son of a controversial father.

Whether Stielike's faith will be rewarded is open to doubt. In all honesty, few roles could guarantee greater frustration for a born winner, such as Stielike undoubtedly is, than being the manager of Switzerland.

Stielike ... he had great success as a player, but he faces an Alp-sized task as Swiss supremo.

SWITZERLAND LAST YEAR

Mar 31 – 0-1 h v Italy
Apr 3 – 2-1 h v Romania (Hermann, Chassot)
May 8 – 1-1 h v Argentina (Turkyilmaz)
Jun 2 – 2-1 h v United States (Schepull, Knup)
Aug 19 – 3-1 a v Austria (Turkyilmaz two, Knup)
Sep 12 – 2-0 h v Bulgaria (Hottiger, Bickel)
Oct 17 – 1-2 a v Scotland (Knup, pen)
Nov 14 – 4-0 a v San Marino (A Sutter, Chapuisat, Knup, Chassot)
Dec 19 – 0-4 a v Germany

SWISS SQUAD

THE MANAGER

Ulrich 'ULI' STIELIKE. Aged 36 (born November 15, 1954). Scored three goals in 42 internationals for West Germany, and was a member of the team which finished runners-up to Italy in 1982 World Cup. Stielike began his senior career under Hennes Weisweiler at Borussia Moenchengladbach in 1973. After their 3-1 Champions' Cup Final defeat by Liverpool in 1977, Stielike joined Real Madrid – the last 'personal' signing of their legendary president, Santiago Bernabeu, who died less than a year later.
Stielike, playing mainly in midfield though he was used as sweeper by West Germany, was a mainstay at Madrid for a decade.
He left for Neuchatel Xamax in 1985 but the last three years of his career were marred by the knee injuries which forced his premature retirement. Stielike, with no previous coaching experience, succeeded Paul Wolfisberg as manager in 1989. His hot-tempered touchline antics during and after last autumn's 2-1 defeat by Scotland earned him a three-match ban from UEFA, reduced to one on appeal.

THE PLAYERS

Stefan HUBER. Goalkeeper. Aged 24 (born June 14, 1966) with no caps as yet. Lausanne. A domestic service engineer who has made rapid progress since joining Lausanne in 1988. First called into the squad for the October defeat by Scotland.

Philipp WALKER. Goalkeeper. Aged 23 (born July 20, 1967) with eight caps. Lugano. A student who moved to Lugano two years ago. Highly-rated by Stielike who says: "I need a goalkeeper who is brave and not afraid to throw himself in where it hurts."

Martin BRUNNER. Goalkeeper. Aged 27 (born April 23, 1963) with 30 caps. Grasshoppers. Had three years uninterrupted run as first-choice keeper after making his debut in May 1986, in a 2-0 win over Algeria in Geneva. Considered a 'reflex' keeper, happier on his goal-line than when he has to come out to dominate the penalty box. Favourite club: Manchester United.

Hermann ... held back by Griga of Czechoslovakia while winning one of his 107 caps.

Andre EGLI. Centre back/stopper. Aged 32 (born May 8, 1958) with 61 caps. Neuchatel Xamax – whom he joined last summer after five years with Grasshoppers. Egli agreed to his recall to the squad last autumn after quitting the national team in August 1987 after a row with then manager Daniel Jeandupeux. Egli, who made his Switzerland debut in a 2-0 defeat by Italy back in November, 1979, was upset when Jeandupeux tried him out at centre-forward. Last summer Egli met Stielike on a coaching course and hinted that he was ready to reconsider his exile. When Marcel Koller and Marc Hottiger were injured Stielike asked Egli to make his return against Scotland – against whom he gave away a controversial penalty and was later sent off (and suspended by UEFA for one game).

Geiger ... one of his country's top defenders, capped 66 times.

Alain GEIGER. Centre back/sweeper. Aged 30 (born November 5, 1960) with 66 caps. Sion. One of the best defenders in Switzerland. Has also played in midfield in emergency for his country after starting his career as a leftback with Sion. Starred in their 1981 cup final over Young Boys before joining Servette, for whom he enjoyed more cup final success – scoring the extra-time winner against Lausanne in 1983. Geiger moved to France with Saint-Etienne then returned to Sion last summer. A connoisseur of Japanese and Italian cooking.

Marcel HELDMANN. Centre back/defensive midfield. Aged 24 (born December 9, 1966) with two caps. Wettingen. A surprise choice in the national squad against Scotland since only a month earlier he could not secure a place in the first team of struggling Wettingen.

Marc HOTTIGER. Central defender. Aged 23 (born November 7, 1967) with 10 caps. Lausanne. Missed the 2-1 defeat by Scotland at Hampden because of injury.

Dominique HERR. Defender. Aged 25 (born October 25, 1965) with 13 caps. Lausanne. Now in his third season with Lausanne.

Peter SCHEPULL. Central defender. Aged 26 (born June 7, 1964) with 11 caps. Servette – whom he joined last summer after three years with Wettingen (In his absence the Wettingen defence fell apart).

Urs FISCHER. Defender/midfield. Aged 24 (born February 20, 1966) with four caps. St Gallen. Now in his fourth season with St Gallen. Named by coach Stielike as a standby reserve for last November's match against San Marino in case of injury.

Thomas BICKEL. Midfield. Aged 27 (born October 6, 1963) with 21 caps. Grasshoppers. Previously played for derby rivals FC Zurich after beginning his career with FC Biel. A bank clerk who plays centre midfield for his club.

Christophe BONVIN. Midfield. Aged 25 (born April 14, 1965) with 16 caps. Neuchatel Xamax – who signed him three years ago from Sion. Bonvin's claim to fame was that he had scored Sion's decisive third goal when they beat Servette 3-1 in the 1985-86 cup final. Also scored the match-winner in a 1-0 win over Israel in May, 1987, on his international debut – one of 18 Swiss players to achieve that feat. Was originally a left winger.

Heinz HERMANN. Midfield. Aged 32 (born March 28, 1958) with 107 caps. Servette. Switzerland's record international and the only Swiss player to have reached a century of caps. Hermann long ago overhauled the previous record of 84 caps whi had been set by the 1930s defender Severino Minelli. Xamax Neuchatel. Acclaimed five times times as Footballer of the Year, Hermann is a glass-blower by profession. He joined Grasshoppers as a 13-year-old, moved on to Neuchatel Xamax in 1986 and then to Servette last year. Elder brother Herbert was also an international. Heinz was a quick-tempered youngster but soon learned his lesson after being sent off against Hungary in the 1982 World Cup qualifiers. Numbers Franz Beckenbauer among his admirers.

Blaise PIFFARETTI. Midfield. Aged 24 (born March 9, 1966) with 15 caps. Sion. A building worker who scored ten goals in 26 games last season for Sion. Plays right side midfield for his club.

Alain SUTTER. Forward/midfield. Aged 23 (born January 22, 1968) with 21 caps. Grasshoppers. Sutter was 'Hoppers' joint top scorer last season with 12 goals, the same total as Bickel and Andre Halter. No relation to Beat Sutter.

Adrian KNUP. Forward. Aged 22 (born July 2, 1968) with 12 caps. Luzern – whom he joined last year from Aarau. Scorer of four goals in Switzerland's last six games.

Stephane CHAPUISAT. Forward. Aged 21 (born June 28, 1969) with 12 caps. Lausanne. Scorer of 11 goals in 22 games last season for Lausanne. The son of a former international who was a notorious hot-head, Pierre-Albert Chapuisat (whose career was effectively when he was sacked by the Vevey club for a foul tackle which ripped apart the knee of fellow international Lucien Favre). Son Stephane appears to have learned the lesson and has attracted none of his father's bad publicity on or off the pitch. Plays on the left side of attack for his club and was the league's top scorer before the winter break.

Beat SUTTER. Forward/right wing. Aged 28 (born December 12, 1962) with 43 caps. Neuchatel Xamax. Made his international debut in a 1-1 draw against Italy in 1983. Began his senior career with FC Basel, transferring to Xamax in 1986 and celebrating a championship win at the end of his first season. No relation to Alain Sutter – Beat was brought up in the German region of Switzerland, Alain in the French.

Kubilay TURKYILMAZ. Forward. Midfield. Aged 23 (born March 4, 1967) with 24 caps. Bologna (Italy) – whom he joined last November from Servette for a Swiss record £1.8million. The deal very nearly fell through when Bologna's Bulgarian defender Niki Iliev turned down initial arrangements for his loan to Leeds. Turkyilmaz is a car salesman who joined Servette in 1989 from Bellinzona. He is Swiss-born of Turkish "gastarbeiter" parents. Earned his initial national squad call-up in November, 1987, thanks to his goal-scoring exploits in the league and, in particular, a spectacular hat-trick against Lausanne. A few weeks earlier he had formally taken up Swiss citizenship and been immediately drafted into the under-21 squad. He was Servette's six-goal leading scorer at the time of his transfer.

Frederic CHASSOT. Forward. Aged 21 (born March 31, 1969) with five caps. Neuchatel Xamax. Appeared as substitute in both the last two matches, against San Marino (where he scored) and then Germany.

ALL CHANGE AT JUVENTUS

Agnelli's new team use another style

BY JANE NOTTAGE

THE revolution that has been going on at top Italian club Juventus is gathering momentum. With a final sweep, the old guard go out and the new come in, along with a completely different style of management.

The Juventus of the past 20 years had been characterised by the "old gentlemen of the game" such as Giampiero Boniperti, ex-player and from earlier this year ex-chairman, and Pietro Giuliano, now ex-general manager.

These men guided the club to every victory possible – nine League championships, three Italian cups, all the European trophies, the Super Cup and the Intercontinental cup.

But in the past four years successes have been few and the disasters more frequent.

After the dynamic Giovanni Trappatoni left to manage Internazionale and Michel Platini retired, Juventus had been somewhat in the doldrums. Although the club haven't exactly been bottom of the League or in grave difficulties, everyone was so used to Juventus winning that when they stopped it was a shock.

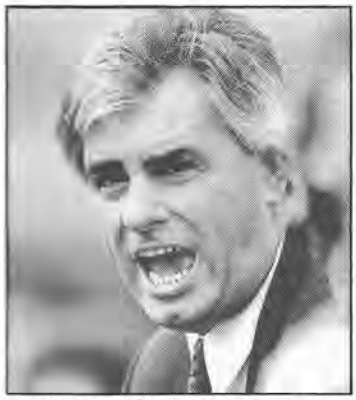
Then, in 1987, Ian Rush was expected to be the saviour but, for one reason and another, he was not and was back with Liverpool after a year.

The 1988-89 season wasn't a great success. Ex-goalkeeper and World Cup captain Dino Zoff took over as manager, but he too lasted only a year, despite winning the Italian Cup.

Some said he was only brought in as a caretaker anyway, but others said his lack of communication skill wasn't in line with the Juventus image.

Zoff is a typical Fruilano (an area in the North of Italy near the Austrian border) very serious, and a man of few words.

Honorary chairman Giovanni Agnelli, the super-powerful Fiat boss, knew who should be leading the management team at the club, and sure enough, after outstanding success in organising the World Cup, Luca Cordero di Montezemolo is now executive vice-president of Juventus.



Agnelli (left), super-powerful boss of Fiat and chairman of Juventus, made Montezemolo (centre) executive vice-president. Maifredi (right) is the team manager, and Boniperti (top) is now the ex-chairman.

He had been working behind the scenes during last season, when he was instrumental in capturing Roberto Baggio from a very reticent Fiorentina.

But apart from strengthening the team, Montezemolo obviously had very clear ideas as to management style. He has modern marketing and communication skill as well as drive and enthusiasm, and wants a 20th-century management style.

World Cup Press Office chief Enrico Bendoni, who demonstrated his management potential in the lead-up to and during the World Cup, has been given the plum job of general manager at Juventus, with more power than the chairman, Vittorio Chiusano.

As Montezemolo's right-hand man he will be responsible for leading Juventus into the year 2000, and that includes marketing and sponsorship.

From next year there will be a special Upim stand (Upim being a chain of stores and club sponsor) in which only families will be seated.

Montezemolo also is planning special incentive schemes for the youth teams, a closer rapport with the families of the players, and more training camps.

He has continued his idea from the World Cup of having "official sponsors" and several Italian companies (Kappa, Ferrero and Gatorade are three) are now associated with Juventus.

This obviously involves advertising rights in the ground and other benefits which can fit into marketing strategy, including player availability and match tickets.

Sponsor relationship is handled by Nicolo Bastianini, a Milanese lawyer who was Montezemolo's executive assistant at Italia'90.

Balanced

One of the great novelties is the employment of yet another ex-Italia '90 official in the information area. Giorgio Catalano, 28, and born in Rome, will take on the organisation of the data bank at Juventus, including ticket sales, so that fans will be able to buy tickets for any match from Banca Nazionale de Lavoro branches throughout Italy.

This will enable fans from other cities to travel to matches and should render the club less provincial, with a more balanced national following.

There have been some drastic changes within the club to make way for the new blood.

General manager Pietro Giuliano, who has been with Juventus for 20 years, is now an external consultant and will run Sisport, the sport and marketing arm of the club.

But Giuliano won't have any direct influence on the day-to-day running of affairs.

He arrived at Juventus in 1970 after a brief appearance with the youth team and entered the management side when he met his old friend Giampiero Boniperti. It was a partnership set to last for 20 years.

Now as one era ends a new one kicks off. Previously Juventus had been predominately ruled by "Torinese" managers. Now Bendoni and Catalano are both from Rome. It will be interesting to see how they are accepted. The Torinese people are notoriously reserved and dislike the exuberance of the south.

With the combined talents of the new guard it shouldn't be difficult to be accepted. As Montezemolo said: "We aren't undergoing a revolution – just moving with the times."

Just so that all ties with the past aren't completely severed, Boniperti's son, Giampaolo, has been appointed official co-ordinator and will travel with the team and be responsible for all contact with other teams and the referees.

Can Juventus lead the way to the future of Italian football? And will other teams, notably AC Milan, owned by the ebullient Silvio Berlusconi, react to the challenge and come up with their own plans to "revolutionise" Italy's most popular sport?

Tacconi lifts the Italian Cup after the 1988-89 Juventus victory.

THE NEW JUVENTUS

Chairman: Vittorio Caissotti di Chiusano
Executive vice-president: Luca Cordero di Montezemolo
Vice-president: Remo Giordanetti
Board: Edoardo Agnelli and Giovanni Agnelli jr. (son and nephew of Giovanni Agnelli), Giampaolo Boniperti, Bartolomeo Bertinotti, Camillo Cavalli d'Olivola, Ernesto Ferrero di Ventimiglia, Cesare Fiorio, Giuseppe Donega, Fabrizio Zanon di Valgiurata
General director: Enrico Bendoni
Director of sport: Francesco Morini
General manager: Nello Governato
Secretary: Sergio Secco
Head of external relations: Piero Bianco
Head of informatics: Giorgio Catalano
Press officer: Alberto Refrigeri
Team co-ordinator: Giampaolo Boniperti
Head of medical team: Giuseppe Bosio
Team manager: Gigi Maifredi

England (A), England (H), England 3rd
England Goalkeeper (A), England Goalkeeper (H)

Boca Juniors (Arg), Independiente (Arg), River Plate (Arg)
Cork City (Eire), Barcelona (H) (Sp)

Roma (A), Naples (A), Fiorentina (A)
Roma (H), Naples (H), Fiorentina (H)

Pisa (H), Pisa (A), Inter Milan (A), Inter Milan (H)
Sampdoria, AC Milan, Juventus, Cremoneses

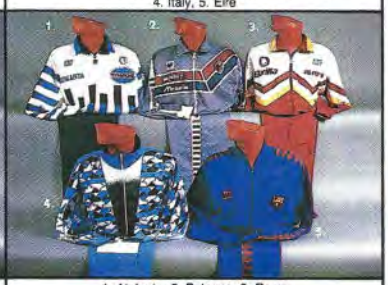
Flamengo (H), Portuguesa (H), Vasco de Gama (H)
Santos (H), Fluminenses (A), Gremio

Corinthians (A), Sao Paulo (A), Bragantina (A)
Corinthians (H), Sao Paulo (H), Bragantina (H)

Yugoslavia, Spain, Sweden, France
Italy, Brazil, Argentina

1. Eire (Shell), 2. Switzerland, 3. West Germany
4. Italy, 5. Eire

1. Juventus, 2. Naples, 3. Inter Milan
4. Toulouse, 5. Bayern Munich



1. Atalanta, 2. Bologna, 3. Roma
4. Pisa, 5. Barcelona

Ireland (Eire) (A), W. Germany (A), Switzerland (A)
Ireland (Eire) (H), W. Germany (H), Switzerland (H)

Bordeaux, Sochaux, Nantes, St. Etienne
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Monaco, Nantes, Marseilles, St. Ettienne, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Sochaux

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Spanish League
Barcelona (H)

Argentinian League
Boca Jnrs, Independiente (H), River Plate (H)

Brazilian League
Flamengo, Santos (H), Gremio, Sao Paulo (H), Sao Paulo (A), Vasco de Gama (H), Fluminenses (H), Portugeses (H), Corinthians, Bragentines

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SPOTLIGHT ON ENZO

A flop at Inter, Belgium's World Cup star now reigns at Auxerre

Scifo shows his class against South Korea in Italy last summer and right, enjoying more success with Auxerre.

SCIFO RIDING HIGH

BY KEIR RADNEDGE

HALF PAST seven in the morning. Verona airport. The first flight of the morning now boarding. Heading for Rome is a mixed assortment of commuters, students, World Cup journalists and one young man minding his own business.

He was travelling light. His right hand gripped one small leather holdall. His dress was casual but sharp. He might have been any neat, smart, handsome young Italian.

But Italian he was not, even though he had been christened Vincenzo. Instead he was Belgian: Enzo Scifo, flying south on a personal errand the morning after failing to help his national team elude defeat at the hands of Spain in a first-round World Cup-tie.

Scifo had tried his best in a low-key team performance. He had been fouled for the free-kick from which Patrick Vervoort struck Belgium's first-half goal. Later, however, he had smacked a penalty kick against the bar and Belgium had lost 2-1.

As he strolled up the steps of the aircraft Scifo looked not at all concerned. After all, Belgium had already been assured of their place in the second round before the match against Spain kicked off. Thus manager Guy Thys had rested a couple of injured regulars who might otherwise have played.

That defeat proved crucial. Instead of facing Yugoslavia, then maybe Argentina, the Belgians would play England in Bologna.

The outcome is now football history. For all Scifo's woodwork-cracking rocketry, Belgium would lose to the last kick of extra time and return home.

But while Belgium's standing in the international arena would slip a little, Scifo's personal reputation had been re-established after four years in which it had faded – locked in a time warp created by some ill-advised transfers and his own youth and inexperience of the real world and the world of big-time soccer.

Refused

Here in Italy, with Internazionale, Scifo had flopped in the wake of an expensive and much-heralded transfer from Belgian champions Anderlecht. Now, with Auxerre and the best midfielder in the French league, Scifo can look back with an air of realistic detachment.

He says: "I see now I was too young. I was only 21. That's much too young to go to a club like Inter and be a 'leader.' I know that's what Trapattoni, who was then the coach, expected. He wanted me to be his Platini. But I was too immature. Trapattoni was very fair. Even when things went really badly he refused to drop me. He said I had to keep playing. That was the way to gain the experience I needed. But, of course, in the end I ran out of time.

"Now I can see the fruits of all that work – and suffering – paying off. I have become the midfield general of a settled Belgian national team. That was always my first objective.

"As for my next ... my secret dream is that one day I will return to play in an Italian club and take my revenge!"

For this resurrection, Scifo owes an enormous debt to veteran national manager Thys. And he knows it. Scifo says: "Thys is a father-figure, a very wise man. He needs just a glance to understand a problem and find a solution. He reads a game very easily. He knows, almost in advance, when we should step up the tempo or when we should dig in. I owe him a great deal."

Throughout Scifo's career, Thys has turned up like a magician at just the right moment to put the Scifo show back on the rails.

Scifo's parents were Sicilian. Back in 1957 they had followed a common migration and moved north looking for mining work. Father Agostino found it, eventually, in the Belgian town of La Louviere, some 35 miles from Brussels.

On February 19, 1966, their third child was born, at the village of Haine Saint Paul. He was christened Vincenzo and, though Belgian-born, his boyhood years saw him bitten as deeply as any starry-eyed Italian by a love of football.

Elder brother Giuseppe, known as Pino, played in the youth sections of the local, La Louviere, club. So Enzo joined too – aged seven.

Remarkable

Soon it was clear he possessed a rare gift. And the young Scifo realised the potential. Now he says: "I understood that football was a talent I possessed which offered a better life than that of my father. I used to see him come home from the mine every night and tell me about his day and about what sounded like hell – the mud, the dirt, the danger and working on your knees, buried in the earth away from the sun and the sky."

Scifo was spotted by Jef Jurion, former captain of Anderlecht and Belgium and later an agent. Jurion was then La Louviere's general manager. He told his directors: "We have a teenager who looks remarkable. He's no bigger than a blade of grass but he has the greatest natural talent."

In four seasons with the juniors of La Louviere Scifo collected a staggering 432 goals. Other emigrant children found they had to possess something extra to overcome Belgian "protectionism." But Scifo could not be ignored – particularly after he starred, at 15, at a youth tournament in West Berlin.

One year later and La Louviere found a delegation from Anderlecht on their doorstep.

A simple fee of £15,000 and he was swept away to the Belgian capital.

Scifo has never moved with ease. He did not like Brussels one little bit. He was homesick. So Anderlecht let him live at home and his father drove him up to the big city every day for training. The dedication of father and son paid off. Scifo was told, in the summer of 1982, that he might shortly be given his chance in the first team.

But Yugoslav Tomislav Ivic was the coach.

He kept Scifo waiting – growing more and more disillusioned until, in the autumn of 1982, Ivic was replaced by Anderlecht's old favourite, Paul Van Himst – once Belgium's greatest-ever player and recently youth coach to Scifo.

In the spring of 1983 Van Himst tried Scifo out in a four-team tournament, ironically, in Italy. The start of the following season saw his league debut, as a substitute introduced on the hour against Beerschot. Then came a European debut, this time substituting centre-forward Kenneth Brylle against the Norwegian part-timers of Bryne. In December Van Himst lined up Scifo from the start, for the first time, in a league game against Waterschei.

Waterschei scored first, in the 55th minute. Scifo responded with an instant equaliser, then played a major role in the further goal-scoring exploits of Alex Czerniatynski (two) and Erwin Vandenbergh.

Quickly, word spread, even as far as Italy. Franco Previtali, then general manager of Second Division Atalanta, flew to Brussels to watch Scifo in action. He was impressed. Later Previtali said: "He reminded me of Gianni Rivera. He was clearly a star in the making. If I'd gone a couple of weeks earlier I think I could have signed him for £30,000 and brought the whole family back to Italy with him. But by the time I got there it was too late. He just took off."

The international launch pad was Anderlecht's UEFA Cup quarter-final against Moscow Spartak. Scifo inspired a 4-2 home leg victory. Italian referee Paolo Bergamo said: "Scifo plays as if he is on another planet."

In the semi-finals Scifo inspired a sensational comeback against Nottingham Forest. Suddenly he was headline news not only in Belgium, but in Italy. As the son of Italian parents, Scifo possessed dual nationality. Enzo Bearzot, then Italy's manager, would have selected him for duty to secure his loyalty. But, in the end it was loyalty to Anderlecht which swung the day.

A fat new contract persuaded Scifo not only to sit tight in Brussels, but to take up Belgian citizenship and star in the 1984 European Championship and the 1986 World Cup.

One year more and the inevitable could be delayed no longer. Anderlecht sold Scifo to Internazionale. But his homecoming proved a sad one. The pressures of both soccer and life in general in Italy were too much for him. After only one year he was sent to France, on loan with Bordeaux. A poor season there and he was loaned further down the scale to Auxerre – where his game now blossoms.

Rewarded

Thys it was who had brought Scifo into the Belgian national team as a teenager; Thys who kept faith with him for the 1986 World Cup. When Scifo fell out with Walter Meeuws, Belgium's managerial successor, it was Thys who returned to the helm to pour oil on troubled waters. Scifo had walked out on Meeuws in the early spring of last year when Meeuws dropped him from the line-up for a friendly against Greece.

That was the last straw not only for Scifo, but for the federation. Thys was recalled from semi-retirement. He, in turn, restored Scifo to his midfield and was duly rewarded – though Thys, it must be said, saw Scifo's displays at Italia'90 as far more than his own personal achievement.

Laconic as ever, Thys looked out from under those sleepy eyes and summed up Belgium's World Cup in two sentences, saying: "To lose, as we did to England, was a big disappointment. To rediscover one of our greatest players has been a remarkable consolation."

Thanks to Scifo, Auxerre are challenging Marseille at the top of the French championship. But he remains the "property" of Internazionale. His loan expires on June 30.

Odds-on Scifo will again be taking a plane ride south.

GASCOIGNE?

HE'S ONLY A FOOTBALLER ROBERT REDFORD HE AIN'T

Taking advice ... Gascoigne with lawyer Stein, half of the couple who provide services for his selection.

The Brian Glanville COLUMN

THE importance of being Gazza. Or the pressures. All roads, you might say, seem at the moment to lead to Paul Gascoigne.

He was voted BBC-TV Sportsman of the Year; and some people protested. He was accused on the front page of the Daily Mirror of swearing at some girl fans at Maine Road. He was dropped by Graham Taylor in Dublin. He was sent off, under the beady eye of direct television itself, during the Spurs-Manchester United game, by referee Vic Callow, for using bad language. He was pilloried in Pete Davies's book, All Played Out, for allegedly abusing a girl friend, in a telephone conversation Davies overheard at Heathrow.

It may all, in time, be more than flesh and blood can bear, and it hardly helps when a man called, I kid you not, Dr. Sik (sic?) writes in The Times that Gazza is just a jolly extrovert whose pranks amuse us, while Tony Adams (has he ever been within a mile of him?) is the dour product if a dour team, and thus denied the same kind of tolerance.

Extrovert, in any case, seems to me one of those sloppy Jungian formulations which really tell us nothing. Again, what contact has the good Dr. Sik had with Gazza?

Those who do know him will tell you that he is in fact a thin-skinned, vulnerable young man, whose former obsessive practical joking and cheery inconsequentiality were essentially a smokescreen.

Handled by a couple of London lawyers, Stein and Lazarus, who take no cut of his huge earnings, but simply charge for whatever services they provide, apparently by the hour, Gascoigne has unquestionably become a very rich young man, very quickly. One hopes he will keep it all, but you never know.

Colossal

This is to cast no aspersions on the work of Messrs. Stein and Lazarus, simply to say that over the years stars far greater than Gascoigne is today, sometimes protected by what seemed cast-iron advice, have lost their fortunes.

Pele, you may remember, was ruined twice. His Spanish business manager, Pepe Gordo, whom he engaged when he was very young, ran through most of his money.

When he built up his fortune again, Pele was persuaded by his pal and team-mate, the attacking half-back Zico, not only to put his money into a certain firm, but to sign guarantees.

This not only involved him in colossal losses, but led to heavy fines for the company's malfeasance; something he knew nothing about.

Then there was Johan Cruyff. Multilingual, with an intelligence which leaves Gascoigne toiling in the rear, Cruyff used his hard-nosed father-in-law, Cor Coster, to handle his business affairs.

Cruyff would talk to you at length in any number of languages, but woe betide if you wanted an official interview. It would cost you a packet.

When Cruyff went to Barcelona, a Yugoslav called Basilevich wheedled his way into the good graces of the charming Mrs Dany Cruyff; both had children at the same school.

In due time, Coster or no Coster, Cruyff was involved in various business schemes with Basilevich. Not for a moment would I suggest that Basilevich was anything but a paragon of commercial virtue, acting from the highest possible motives, but the fact is that no only did the schemes lose lots of money; Cruyff found himself in trouble with the Spanish tax authorities.

Changes, alas, have taken place in Gascoigne. He is no longer the exuberant "extrovert", to use that dubious word again. Where his relations with the Press were once quite jolly, now they tend to be sour.

They were sour throughout the World Cup, culminating in the ridiculous episode in Bologna when, after a training session, he threw from the England coach window a cardboard cup full of water? Cola? – at the unfortunate Paul Parker; guilty of no more than giving a courteous interview to a journalist.

This behaviour by Gazza was, it seemed to me, ether-directed; a term coined some 40 years ago by the American sociologist for behaviour which is influenced from outside: as opposed to inter-directed behaviour, which comes from within the self.

Gascoigne, in a word, seemed to have fallen prey to the sour, almost paranoiac, atmosphere which hung over the England team.

A moment's cogitation surely

Taken to tax ... Cruyff got into trouble as well as losing money.

Trouble twice over ... Pele took bad advice and lost two fortunes as a result of it.

would have shown Gascoigne the paradox of his ways. Without the Press, he might not even have been in the England party, let alone the team.

All very well for Bobby Robson, now, to insist he held back till Gazza was "ready." His behaviour and his utterances told a very different story.

None of us who applauded, supported and promoted Gascoigne in the years before the World Cup deserve an ounce of gratitude for it. Our reward was to see him in the World Cup team; and doing so wonderfully well. But the minimal courtesies would not have come amiss.

Contract

Gascoigne has a superb football brain, but off the field he is neither as mature nor as intelligent as the 30-year-old, much-travelled, Gary Lineker, who handles his Press relations superbly, with relaxation, humour and charm.

This problem has been exacerbated by the fact that Gascoigne, most unwisely in the view of many in football and Fleet Street, has signed an exclusive contract with a single paper: the Sun.

Could this have anything to do with the extraordinary and hyperbolic attack made on him by the Mirror?

Idols, alas, are historically there to be knocked down, and Gazza this season has sometimes been his worst enemy. Spite, jealousy and delight in other people's misfortunes surround the star. The Mirror attack was a ludicrous piece of overkill, but other sharks wait in the waters.

One danger which should be avoided is to demand treatment for Gascoigne – whether the demand be made by himself or others – which seems to equate him with some Hollywood star.

He is a professional footballer, not Elizabeth Taylor or Robert Redford. His exploits take place on sometimes muddy fields, they depend to a substantial extent, for all his natural brilliance, on the other members of the team, and like any other athlete he horribly liable to crippling injuries which can change his whole situation radically, in one awful moment.

Mr Stein has been known to speak, obscurely, about no other footballer having passed "into the media," as Gascoigne has done. I am the last to deny that his rise has been spectacular, but by comparison, say with Pele, with Best at his best, with the heroes of other sports such as Cassius Clay and Babe Ruth, he is almost an obscurity.

What is happening to him is worrying. I do not intend to go into the whys and wherefores of his sending off against Manchester United. I did not see that game, but in other matches I have seen at Tottenham, he has sometimes been the injured party – as he was against Liverpool – sometimes the aggressor.

There have been matches, in the past, in which he has shown remarkable self control; notably that game at Wimbledon when Vinny Jones, needling him throughout, at one stage grabbed hold of his genitals.

Media

Pressures have increased enormously since then, and who, of his age and background, could be expected to bear them without trouble? Alienating the media, in such circumstances, is a recklessly self-destructive thing to do.

In a curious way, George Best, even at his most undisciplined and outrageous, never quite did that. The charm, the humour were always hard to resist. Gascoigne will never match them.

Beyond this, I have no desire to join in the displeasing exchange of insults between the two. It was wrong and foolish of Best to make comparisons between his own career and Gascoigne's.

In his column in the Sun, Gascoigne was suitably restrained, but an interview in a glossy magazine was far less inhibited. Which seems to suggest that with the best will in the world, Gascoigne's advisers cannot hope to monitor his every utterance.

I was glad he won the BBC Sportsman of the Year award, sad when he was dropped in Dublin, sadder about the sour way he now treats the media.

Gary Lineker and Terry Venables could give him the best advice on that. If he is prepared to listen.

Curle repeats Bristol fashion

SOMETIMES I wonder how many fine players were born in Bristol, and somehow eluded the Bristolian clubs. Arsenal had two: Eddie Hapgood and Arthur Milton.

Hapgood was actually, and belatedly, offered terms by Bristol Rovers, when he was driving a milk cart one summer.

Players with lesser clubs had to make up their wages as best they might. Rovers offered him a summer job driving a coal cart, but Hapgood found that infra dig.

He therefore, aged 19 – yes, he still had not been discovered by then – signed with Kettering, then as now (though perhaps for not much longer) a non-League club. He wasn't there for long.

Arsenal finally spotted him and took him to Highbury where, after a period in which he used regularly to faint when he headed the ball, they built him up in every way; into the best left-back in the game, captain of England and a paragon for any young footballer.

He was my hero when I was a small schoolboy, writing him letters (till a master put a stop to it).

Converted

Keith Curle, one of the many Third and Fourth Division players brought to Wimbledon by Bobby Gould, is another Bristolian, converted from a right-winger into a centre-half at Reading, who pocketed £500,000 for him when he moved to Wimbledon. At 27, he is now worth a great deal more.

While he was in the Reading defence, there were those who thought that despite his speed he was rather erratic, but with Wimbledon this season he has been an impressive figure.

So has Warren Barton, who arrived from the obscurity of Maidstone last summer for £300,000 as primarily a right-back but, as a right midfielder, capable of popping up anywhere across the line, has been one of the most pleasing revelations of the season.

Curle played for both Bristol City and Bristol Rovers and was under Gould's wing in his own Bristolian managerial days.

Changes

Gould has his secret, he says; Don Howe pays tribute to the way he can go to a match, come away saying there's nothing there, only for Gould to pick out this player and that one.

As for the secret, it remains one; Gould isn't telling, any more than he will tell you what has changed in football to bring about this sudden efflorescence of talent from the lower divisions in the championship.

When QPR, who appointed Gould as assistant to Howe, had three central defenders injured, Gould recommended Peacock, of Fourth Division Hereford, and Tillson, of Third Division Grimsby Town.

Oddly enough, Tillson once played for Kettering, Peacock was born in Bristol; though it was Newport who made him a professional.

Gould's secret, compounded by endless driving up and down the motorways, would be pretty valuable to any big club. How many Bartons have been born to blush unseen?

Curle ... from winger to centre-half, from Reading to Wimbledon.

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Brolin celebrates his goal for Sweden against Brazil ... recalling the historic clash in the 1958 World Cup.

SKOGLUND THE SECOND

Brolin brings back those magic memories

BY PENTTI HIETANEN

TOMAS BROLIN'S international breakthrough and recent Player of the Year award has brought back fond memories in Sweden.

Only 12 months ago Brolin was just another young forward trying to make an impression. Today he is an internationally acknowledged star in the world's most competitive league, playing for Italy's Parma.

Everything has been so easy for Brolin. In Sweden, such a rapid rise to stardom is almost unheard of. But not quite.

Back in 1950, a 20-year-old Stockholm-born forward, Lennart Skoglund, was a shock nomination for Sweden's World Cup squad, including only remnants of the fine side who had won gold medals in the London Olympics two years earlier.

Little was expected of this team of only home-based part-timers. But under the searing sun in Brazil, Skoglund suddenly exploded and inspired Sweden to a surprise third place.

Skoglund – Nacka, as everyone called him – then went on to play for Internazionale in Italy, but returned to Sweden for the 1958 World Cup, when they were runners-up to Brazil.

Skoglund became a legend not only for his masterful football but for his carefree way of living. Brolin's different. But the subtlety with which he turned Mozer to score Sweden's goal in their 2-1 World Cup defeat by Brazil was directly from Skoglund's textbook.

So far, Brolin's career has been a story of lucky little coincidences. Things could well have gone so much differently since he began with little IF Nasviken in the Swedish Fourth Division.

As a junior, Brolin was nothing special, so perhaps it was just luck that someone tipped off GIF Sundsvall's coach, Anders Gronhagen. He was impressed by the youngster's potential, and a move was confirmed.

A debut season in the Allsvenskan, in 1987, brought three goals in 12 matches. With figures like that, Brolin was not regarded as one of the likely lads.

But he continued to improve, coupling football with a job as an accountant. Although he could not halt Sundsvall's slide back to the Second Division, he won a place in Sweden's Under-21 team and did enough to attract a bid from IFK Norrkoping.

With stars such as Gunnar Nordahl, Harry Bild, Henry Kallgren, Ove Kindvall and Benny Wendt, Norrkoping have a proud tradition of outstanding scorers. Indeed, at the time of Brolin's arrival, experienced Jan Hellstrom was the League's top marksman and a strong candidate for Olle Nordin's World Cup team.

With Hellstrom around, where would Brolin fit in?

Then destiny provided a helping hand ... Hellstrom was injured in training.

The season was about to start. Norrkoping were due to meet IFK Gothenburg at home. And the coach, Jorgen Augustsson, put Brolin in.

The youngster did not waste any time. Norrkoping gave Gothenburg a 6-0 hiding and Tomas collected a hat-trick.

Suddenly, there was an enormous buzz everywhere about Norrkoping's new boy. And Brolin's luck held.

Gambled

The Swedish national team had hit a lean patch and coach Olle Nordin gambled on Brolin for a friendly against Wales in April last year.

He scored twice in a 4-2 win to surprise everyone, not least the press, who had been championing GAIS Gothenburg forward Magne Gustafsson ahead of Brolin.

Brolin's march to fame continued with two goals in a 6-0 win over Finland, and that glorious goal against Brazil during the World Cup finals.

"I cannot agree with those critics who blamed Olle Nordin for our failure in Italy," says Brolin.

"He believed in me and gave me my debut in the national team with the World Cup finals little more than a month away. Not many coaches would have been bold enough to do that."

The return from Italy was not very sunny for Nordin's team, but Brolin was the exception. He was greeted like a national hero, and was trailed by a host of Europe's top clubs.

He decided to join Parma, newly-promoted, and contract negotiations were conducted by Brolin's father.

"The style of play in Italy impresses me very much," says Brolin. "That was my main motivation, not money or the fact that so many stars play in Italy."

He may have had second thoughts after his debut: he was substituted after being the subject of strongarm tactics by the Juventus defence.

Brolin commented: "Not a great debut, but Scala, our coach, was very understanding about it. He told me not to worry and that there would be plenty of time for me to make my mark."

Since then, The Last Viking, as the Italians call Brolin, has proved that he can get goals even against the tough rearguards of the Calcio. And Swedish fans place their hopes for an impressive European Championship of 1992 – in their own country – on him.

Last September Brolin played excellently in a friend again the World Cup winners, West Germany. Sweden lost 3-1, but Brolin's aggressive running worried the defence all the time.

Local experts agreed that while he lacks something of the tough commitment and all-round quality of the German stars, Klinsmann and Voeller, in two years the youngster from Lapland could well be as good.

And that would be just in time for Euro '92 ...

Sammer seeks regular spot for 'Germany United'

SAMMER, in action against Herr of Switzerland, is earning £10,000 a month.

ODD MAN OUT

BY ARTHUR ROTMIL

HE WAS the only one among 11 German players who did not look straight into the television cameras and did not sing the words of the national anthem.

Matthias Sammer, 23, the first East German selected for the newly united all-German team, was the odd man out before the historic match against Switzerland in Stuttgart.

He stood to attention, but his head was bowed and he stared at an imaginary object on the ground. Later he explained: "I thought about my whole life while the band played the anthem, and that was very pleasant." He admitted he didn't play well, but he had only just recovered from a pulled hamstring.

National team manager Berti Vogts confirmed: "Matthias only reached 60 per cent of his ability, but I know what he can do." And so do the experts who predict a great career for a clever, skilful player who runs VfB Stuttgart's midfield.

Matthias Sammer was born on September 5, 1967, in Dresden, and by the age of five he was playing for the lower grade juniors of Dynamo Dresden, where his father Klaus was active as a player and later team manager.

In 1985 Matthias helped to win the East German junior championship and the cup. A year later he helped the national Under-19 team to win the European Championship.

He played in 102 Oberliga matches, scoring 39 goals, won the League championship in 1989 and the Cup and League double in 1990; and played 23 internationals (six goals) for East Germany, plus five in the Under-21s and 15 for the A-Youth side.

In the summer of 1990 Sammer was transferred to VfB Stuttgart for £730,000, which must be something of a bargain.

He made an immediate impact on the Bundesliga and was voted Player of the Month for August.

When asked what impresses him most about West German football, he says: "The atmosphere, the stadia, the environment and emotions." He admires his clubmate Guido Buchwald, one of the world champions, more than any other player.

Now that he has made the breakthrough into the unified national side, his greatest aim is to gain a permanent place.

"It's a great honour for me to play in the best team in the world," he says. And he wants to show all those Clever Dicks in the East, who thought he would never make it in the West. Sammer is hungry for success.

Looking back at the old German Democratic Republic, he says ruefully: "I feel sorry for the older people for whom four decades of life were ruined. Nobody can give them back that lost time."

But he has not forgotten who to thank for the revolutionary changes and the reunification with the West. "Clearly, it is Mikhail Gorbachev."

And now, as a prosperous western professional, he thinks of the human plight in the Soviet Union. "I want to contribute to the relief fund to help the starving Russians."

Meanwhile his performances have attracted publicity in other parts of Europe. Already two Italian clubs have made inquiries through an agent. But Sammer says: "I intend to honour my contract in Stuttgart till 1992. At the moment I am not interested in anything else."

He still keeps in touch with his former East German international mates. "I often 'phone Rainer Ernst, now at Kaiserslautern – he's a good bloke."

Of course, the biggest difference in lifestyle concerns finances. In the GDR he earned 1,320 East German marks. Now he collects 30,000 Deutschmarks (£10,000) a month.

Visited

So far he hasn't felt homesick. He has visited Dresden twice already and phones his parents regularly. His sister and brother-in-law have come over several times. And he has acquired a girl-friend – literally on the doorstep. Karin, 22, is the daughter of his landlords.

As hobbies, Sammer lists reading and listening to music. He admits he is lazy at home, likes to relax a lot and sleep late.

When he is asked what sort of headline he would like to read about himself, he replies: "Matthias Sammer celebrates his 80th birthday among friends."

His biggest disappointment were the circumstances of his father's dismissal as manager of Dynamo Dresden: his most significant experience was the first international for "Germany United".

Before that he said: "I hope I recognise myself in the morning. I am going to play in a team which I don't know and want to perform as well as I know I can." He realises there would be no benevolence towards the eastern footballers: "Only the performance counts."

But Sammer refuses to draw comparisons between West and East German teams, or pinpoint the differences. "I shall be able to evaluate the situation after ten games or so – and I hope I shall be playing in all of them..."

MASTER BUILDER

How Wilkinson is leading the Leeds revival

BY COLIN BENSON

THE name of Leeds United is again reverberating through English football. The club, a major force in the late sixties and seventies, are making a splash after winning the Second Division title last May under Howard Wilkinson's management.

So ended an eight-year banishment from the First, and their return, although viewed initially with great pessimism in some quarters following the riotous reputation of some of their so-called fans and the nature of their style of play last season, has proved refreshing.

Good results both in league and Rumbelows Cup games have generated the kind of enthusiasm not seen in West Yorkshire for years.

But it is the quality of United's football, rather than the results, that has created the biggest and most pleasant surprise to the outside world. There is a genuine belief that the Peacocks are about to display the colours that graced the game so brilliantly a decade or so ago.

United's glory days are a vivid reminder of standards once achieved and now demanded by a discerning public. Elland Road was the stage on which great championship and cup runs were fashioned: the platform on which some players reached greatness. Is it now to be the launching pad for a new generation of would-be champions?

The late Don Revie was the architect of the club's best years. He transformed a struggling non-descript outfit, with no pedigree other than a Second Division championship run in 1924, into a League Championship team that eventually made a mark in Europe.

For 13 years Revie masterminded a West Yorkshire revolution, steadfastly building brick by brick not only a team but an institution that was to impress the world.

Discipline and pride were key ingredients and an almost obsessive passion for "professionalism" tended, in the formative years at least, to obscure the more refined and creative qualities which were eventually to emerge and win them two League titles as well as the FA Cup, the League Cup and the European Fairs Cup twice, and as a host of runners-up places in all competitions.

Wilkinson: he can pinpoint the moment he fell in love with game. Right: last season's Second Division champions.

As is often the case this legacy has not always been kind to those who have followed. The ghosts of Bremner, Giles, Charlton, Hunter, Lorimer, Madeley, Clarke and company still haunt and taunt.

They set the standards when they made Leeds the powerhouse of the English game – a team who dominated the domestic scene with a quality and consistency that few could match.

Revie was very much a paradox. As a player he was a man of vision, a creative and innovative tactician, whose midfield authority absolutely destroyed Birmingham City when he masterminded Manchester City's FA Cup Final triumph in 1956.

Fear of losing

He was a great theorist and constructive player, with captivating passing skill.

Yet as a manager the fear of losing seemed to dominate his thinking, and caution rather than creativity was the criteria of his early Leeds United sides. He suffered from a sense of insecurity and though thoroughness was very much his watchword there was always a hint of fear about his preparation.

He tried to balance this factor with a competitive edge that led to ruthlessness – an image he was never able to shed.

Perhaps Wilkinson will not appreciate being likened to Revie. In aesthetic terms they are pitches apart. Yet there is a strange mystique that links them.

A common resolve to seek professional perfection, for example: a warm and intimate relationship with their staff, and the somewhat clinical ability to extract and isolate the fundamental essence of a team.

Like Revie, Wilkinson developed from humble roots. He is a miner's son who recalls boyhood trips on the old tramcars that clanked and crawled their way to Hillsborough for big matches.

He can actually pinpoint the moment when he fell in love with the game: "I'd just watched Stanley Matthews win the 1953 Cup Final for Blackpool, on somebody's TV. One family in our yard had a nine-inch set and the lads and the dads were crammed around it in a room that can have been no more than nine by nine.

"Everyone was there to live the fantasy, enjoy the fairytale. That is what football really means."

Wilkinson had played for England Grammar Schools and was an England Youth international but in four years at Hillsborough he came to terms with the fact that he was never going to be another Matthews and fulfil his dream to play for England at the highest level.

A transfer to Brighton in 1966 was to reshape his attitude towards the game. He was 22 and living in digs when Steve Burtenshaw put on a course for coaches. "I joined to fill in the evenings, and fell in love with it," says Wilkinson.

He showed a great aptitude as a teacher and says: "I know it sounds corny but I weren't bad." That assessment was quickly acknowledged by others as he gained his FA full coaching badge.

Wilkinson lists four main qualities that make a good coach. "First, you must have a love and passion for football.

"Second, you must be a good communicator with players – with other people it doesn't matter but you must be able to get on the same wavelength as the players.

"Third, you must be able to sort out what is important in the context of your team and in the context of a game.

"Fourth, at professional level you have to be a competitor, prepared to work hard, and be capable of organising."

Six years at Boston United, the last four as player-manager, helped hone Wilkinson's coaching technique. Jim Smith – now manager of Newcastle – had taken him to Boston, where his success earned him a good reputation.

While there he combined the duties of PE teacher at a school in his native Sheffield before eventually taking on the role of FA staff coach for the North-East.

Wilkinson relinquished that position in December 1979 to become coach at Notts County. They were sixth from bottom of the Second Division, yet by the close of the following season they were bouncing into Division One.

He was promoted to team manager but his position became uncertain when England team chief Bobby Robson tried to recruit him as a permanent staff member after excellent work with the England Under-21 side.

Wilkinson, fair haired and sharp featured, was regarded as one of the brightest young coaches in the game. But loyalty and integrity have always

Bremner: inspiring skipper of the 1973-74 championship squad.

Strachan: doing a great job on and off the field, says his manager.

been values he regarded strongly and he resisted the temptation, saying: "If you have been in football any length of time you learn that it's a handicap to have an ego."

Inevitably he was due to move, and in June 1983 Wilkinson was installed as manager of Sheffield Wednesday. In his first season he led the Owls back to Division One.

There was an FA Cup run to the semi-final, too, but in October 1988 he quit for the considerable challenge of resurrecting Leeds.

By the end of his first summer at Elland Road he had made wholesale changes to the playing staff, investing £1,960,000 on players such as Vinny Jones (from Wimbledon, £650,000); John Hendrie (Newcastle, £600,000); Mel Sterland (Rangers, £600,000); John McClelland (Watford, £100,000); Mickey Thomas, a bargain at £10,000 from Shrewsbury; and Jim Beglin, a free transfer from Liverpool. All this took Wilkinson's spending to £3 million in six months.

Once promoted, he set about the task of gearing the team to the higher grade. Another £1 million went on Scottish international midfielder Gary McAllister, former Leeds goalkeeper John Lukic was brought back from Highbury, central defender Chris Whyte recruited from West Bromwich Albion.

A change to a more measured style of play was adopted. Leeds still remain tough and talented but the skill factor has increased. But the greatest influence on the field is Gordon Strachan, a pint-sized dynamo whose skill and enthusiasm is boundless, whose competitive edge is contagious.

"Gordon has done a great job here both on and off the field," says his boss. "It's nice to take a player like Strachan and form a relationship with him. That is one of the pleasurable aspects of the job."

Strachan, more than any other individual on the playing staff, is helping Leeds rid themselves of the dark reputation that has haunted them over the years. The Peacocks are beginning to strut with that arrogant air of masters, their talent backed by non-stop effort.

And Howard Wilkinson is becoming the man to lead them to the treasures.

TV EVIDENCE SHOULD BE USED TO HELP REFEREES

BY TREVOR BROOKING

I HAVE mentioned on a couple of occasions this season the difficulties developing as a result of the FIFA directive on the professional foul.

The controversy seems to increase each month, with referees striving manfully to achieve the consistency demanded by managers and supporters.

Many countries have seen an increase in the number of players sent off, but the pace and style of the English game seems to make the decisions that much more confusing.

During the third round of the FA Cup there were some debatable incidents highlighting the inconsistencies. Referee Michael Peck controlled both ties between Liverpool and Blackburn, showing three red cards in the process.

The first two were for so-called professional fouls, with Kevin Moran supposedly bringing down Ian Rush, and Glenn Hysen tripping Simon Garner.

Moran was very unlucky. I felt the collision was unavoidable, and was obstruction more than anything. Hysen's was more deliberate and under the new directive was acceptable, and so like Moran he received a three-match ban.

Steve McMahon's dismissal in the replay was for two bookable offences which surprisingly only counted for a one-match ban.

Just as those arguments were subsiding Leeds and Barnsley met in another replay and this time World Cup referee George Courtney was in the middle of the controversy.

Barnsley's Rammell had a clear run, chased by defender McClelland. Just on the edge of the penalty area, McClelland caught Rammell's heel.

Courtney said: "Although he fouled the opponent I saw it as ungentlemanly conduct and not serious foul play, and so it was only worth a caution."

The decision was exactly right, as there was no cynical intent about the challenge, but many referees would have sent McClelland off.

So what can be done to solve a problem that has become the major talking point this season? First, this type of foul needs to be erased, so nobody can dispute the directive itself.

But nobody quite anticipated the various fouls and incidents that happen during 90 minutes being stretched into possible red card situations. The main aim was to cut out the cynical defender who deliberately brings down an opponent when set free.

The inconsistencies are because of the way different referees interpret whether or not the final foul has actually robbed the player of an obvious goal.

Understandably the FA have pointed out that there is bound to be a period of adjustment while defenders learn the realities of their instinctive actions.

With so many matches on TV these days there seems an ideal opportunity at the end of the season to use some of the evidence accumulated on tape.

A seminar involving referees, managers and players could replay a variety of scenes and talk through the rights and wrongs of the decisions made.

A step in the right direction recently took place when the Football League called the first of a series of get-togethers between all interested parties. Six regional meetings will include every referee, and clubs must also send the manager and two players, including the PFA representative.

Stop ... referee George Courtney.

What Revie did can be done again

HOWARD WILKINSON has never felt inhibited by the Leeds of the Don Revie era. "Never," he says. "It's a source of strength.

"What happened then is history, but the fact that it has been done, and done comparatively recently, leads me to believe that it can be done again.

"It is not a situation like that at clubs such as Preston, where their glory days are so far removed from today they have no bearing on the present.

"My methods worked last season. At Notts I inherited a totally different problem. There was no money. But we worked and got things right.

"Sheffield Wednesday was halfway between the two. There was a great sense of frustration there and things needed to be done quickly. It was not easy stepping into Jack Charlton's shadow.

"The emphasis might change but the basics are still the same. The emphasis only changes because the people have changed. The game's top honours can only be achieved by those who are the most gifted. The balance comes about by making sure you have the right material.

"With Leeds you could go all the way because there is the capacity to generate enough finance, but progress must be made step by step. You can develop too quickly.

"It's like scaling Everest. You need to establish your base camps first, then move on to the next objective. There is a lot of climbing still to be done.

"Being successful in football is more a club thing than an individual achievement by players or managers. The club will still be here long after I have gone so it is all about building an institution, setting the ground rules, making sure that people have the right attitude.

Revie: celebrating his team's win over Arsenal in the 1972 FA Cup final. Eddie Gray is on the right.

"Initially the manager sets this pattern. It is the same principle one would use to set up a university, a religious order or any new foundation."

Wilkinson says that football management stretches him to the full, but he does not find the media difficult to deal with.

"I quite enjoy it. But football management has become a personality business and with the best will in the world I can't see me becoming a personality.

"The game is not about making statues or monuments, anyway. It is greater than that, greater than any individual.

Web of mystery

"I have just done my job. There is a great tendency in this business for people to hide behind a web of mystery.

"Some protect their knowledge to make it more expensive. Some protect it to hide their ignorance. But there is no need to complicate things. That shows insecurity."

Wilkinson accepts that the job IS insecure, although his chairman is currently trying to tie him to a long-term contract that will make him the best-paid manager in the game.

"Management is insecure but that is not to say that the content of the job is. A lot of the work is routine."

His greatest pleasure is achieving what he sets out to do.

"We were promoted at Notts and at Sheffield Wednesday, where we were edged into second place by Chelsea. Last year we set out to go up as champions, and we did."

Signing . . . Dalglish with his latest capture, 17-year-old Jamie Redknapp from Bournemouth.

DALGLISH
The ultimate team man

BY KEIR RADNEDGE

KENNY DALGLISH was, for 20 years, revered as a footballer. Over the past six years he has earned new respect as a manager. No small accomplishment in a game where yesterday's hero turns, all too rapidly, into today's shadow man.

The common misconception about the life of a football personality is of a life bouncing from one success to another, basking in public acclaim and financial success.

Dalglish has known all that. But he has known, too, some of the darkest moments not only of the British game but of the modern social history of this country.

He was there, in the dressing room, waiting to play football, when the wall went down at the Heysel Stadium in Brussels in May, 1985. He was there again, this time as manager, when 95 men, women and children went down to their deaths at Hillsborough.

More than anyone else, Dalglish was the sombre public face of Liverpool Football Club. He was there to advise his directors; to council his players; to console; with his presence at funerals and memorial services, the bereaved. In this tragic drama Dalglish was a central point of reference. Never one to waste a sentence, Dalglish's blunt economy of words served with utter, and appropriate, dignity.

It was opposite that his first club, Celtic, should have offered to play a fund-raising friendly against Liverpool; wistfully ironic that Dalglish should not only start the match but score. Celtic Park was the gateway back to football for Liverpool FC and also for Dalglish.

No-one exposed to such tragic events can expect to come through mentally unscathed. First and foremost not the fans, but neither the emergency workers, nor the football personnel nor journalists present on April 15, 1989.

Dalglish, in the public eye from that first moment when the teams were called from the pitch, has been a steadfast example of which both Liverpools, the football club and the city, remains sensibly proud.

Tragic proof, if any were needed, that chairman John Smith, chief executive Peter Robinson and the club's directors knew exactly what they were doing when Dalglish was appointed player-manager in 1985.

Eyebrows were raised elsewhere. Dalglish was not renowned as a motivator in the Clough mould, or theorist of the Graham Taylor variety. Also, the prospect of entrusting a First Division club of Liverpool's size to a player-manager was revolutionary. Even some of the Kop-ites admitted their doubts.

Dalglish reign had the most traumatic of starts, in the wake of Heysel. Here he learned with tragic immediacy, of the awesome challenge which destiny had provided. But a year later Liverpool had done the League and Cup double and all the doubters had been put to flight. Dalglish was a master manager as he had been a master player.

As a boy he had supported Rangers but there was to be no doubting his commitment to Celtic. Dalglish was to Scottish football in the 1970s what Kevin Keegan was to the English game. So it was entirely appropriate that when Keegan was sold to Hamburg in the summer of 1977 it was to Dalglish that Anfield boss Bob Paisley turned as successor.

Dalglish had won 47 caps for Scotland and scored 112 League goals for Celtic at the rate of one every two games. If any dispute or controversy attached to his talents, it was whether he was more valuable in attack or in midfield. Paisley had no doubt: he saw Dalglish's greatest value in his tight control and pinpoint passing in and around the penalty box.

Impact

Liverpool's faithful did not have to wait for him to make an impact. Dalglish scored after only seven minutes of his League debut – a 1-1 draw at Middlesbrough – and hit the winning goal at the end of the season as Liverpool beat Club Brugge of Belgium 1-0 at Wembley to retain the European Cup.

Five times in his first six seasons with Liverpool Dalglish was ever-present in the League. On the odd occasions when he was missing through injury later on, the effect was obvious both on the team's performance and results.

He became one of the very few to top a century of League goals both north and south of the border yet remained an essential part of the Scottish international jigsaw. Dalglish appeared at the World Cup finals in West Germany 1974, in Argentina in 1978 and in Spain in 1982. He became the first Scot to reach 100 international caps, all the while collecting six League championships, four League Cups and three European Cups with Liverpool.

To relate the detail of Dalglish's career, however, is no substitute for an appreciation of one of Scottish football's greatest products, an individual of enormous talent with a rare complementary understanding of the importance of his team-mate.

That football intelligence has carried over into his mangership, where the emphasis on his team selection remains calling on the man who will mould into the best team on any given day. On odd occasions, as this season against Arsenal, Dalglish's judgment has been called into question.

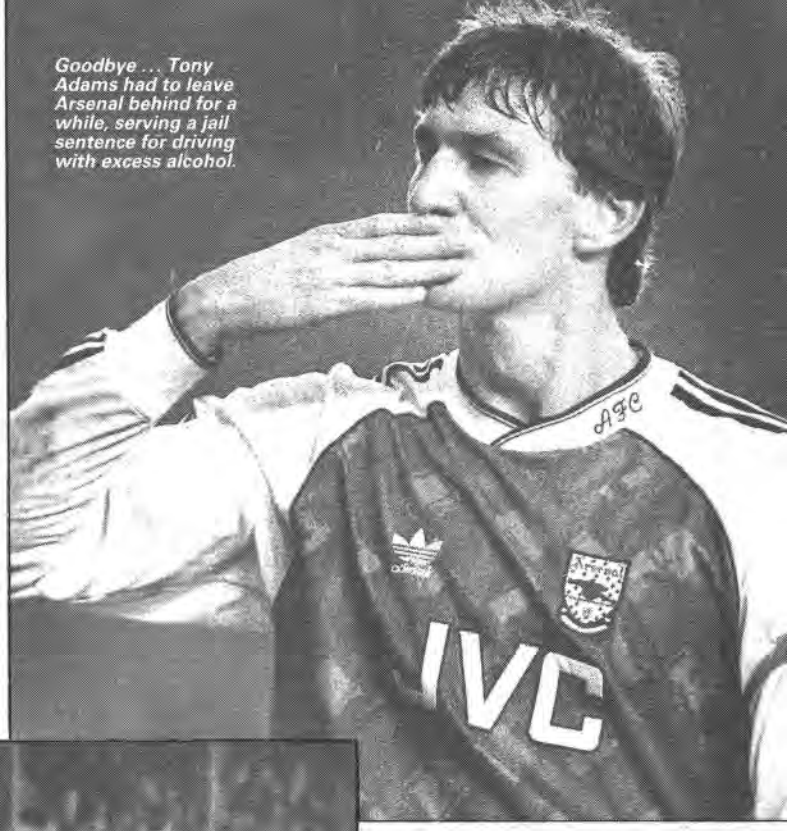
But, at the end of the day, it's good to know that he is human, after all.

Scoring . . . "King Kenny" celebrates a championship-deciding goal at Chelsea in 1986.

WHAT A MIXTURE!

DRINK, JAIL, TEARS, FAIR PLAY AND RED CARDS

BY DERICK ALLSOP



Goodbye ... Tony Adams had to leave Arsenal behind for a while, serving a jail sentence for driving with excess alcohol.

SEVERAL top players in England have been holding the attention of the nation in various ways.

We have had the return of Captain Marvel Bryan Robson, a FIFA Fair Play award for Mr Clean Gary Lineker, and the BBC Sports Personality of the Year trophy going to Crying Eyes Paul Gascoigne.

But we also have had dismissals for, among others, Neil Webb, Glenn Hysen, Steve McMahon, Kevin Moran and the very same Crying Eyes, and we have seen Tony Adams sent to jail for four months after being convicted of drink-driving.

The judge's decision to order Arsenal captain Adams to serve almost half of a nine-months sentence behind bars shook the Highbury club and the entire English game.

The court heard that 24-year-old Adams had been drinking at a barbecue last May. He drove at 73 mph along a 30 mph road, mounted a pavement, demolished a telegraph pole and crashed through a wall into a garden.

The £18,000 Ford was written off and Adams was found to be three times over the legal limit.

Gordon Taylor, leader of the Professional Footballers' Association, said: "This is a case of a famous figure being made an example at this time of year. I am shocked at the severity of the sentence.

"Players should be under the law of the land, but their fame puts them under a heavier spotlight and sometimes they may have to pay a higher penalty because of that."

Strength

For Arsenal it was a stunning blow at the end of a year of traumas. And it came when they needed all the strength they could muster to maintain pressure on League leaders Liverpool.

Manager George Graham, however, supported Adams. He said: "I could not wish for anybody better to be my captain. He has been the complete professional on the field and in training. As a sportsman, he has my complete backing.

"Tony has been a colossus in the past and will be a colossus in the future. He is an inspiring captain and will be missed by everyone connected with the club. I shall feel his loss very acutely."

The conviction met a rather cooler reception at the Football Association, though England manager Graham Taylor has been left free to make his own decision about the player's international future.

Graham believes that Adams, capped 18 times, should not be barred from future internationals. He said: "Other players have had similar offences and yet played for England."

Former England captain Robson is one, although he was not sent to jail.

Robson, recovered from the tendon injury that sabotaged his World Cup, was back on international duty before he had completed a full senior match for Manchester United.

He skippered England's B team in Algeria from the back, a position that may enable him to prolong his oft-threatened career and fulfil his ambition of winning 100 caps. He entered his 35th year with 87.

Robson said: "I would only want to do that by playing well and doing a good job for England. But that would have to be the case anyway. The boss is a straight-talking guy and he manages along those lines.

"It is no good being sentimental just to get me 100 caps if he is losing matches. That is not doing him any favours."

Robson came through the tedious 0-0 draw unscathed, although he was booked for dissent. Webb's comeback came to a more abrupt end: he was sent off for retaliation.

Hello ... Bryan Robson returned to the Manchester United team, just in time to help with a good run of results.

Around this time there was better news for the England camp. Lineker, captain of the senior side, was given due international recognition for his consistent sportsmanship.

FIFA's Fair Play award came with this citation: "He is a living example of his enacting the spirit of fair play in top-level football can be crowned with personal success." Lineker, typically, gave the money to charity.

Lineker's Tottenham team-mate, Gascoigne, had mums and grans fighting back the tears again as he accepted his BBC trophy from the man who had it all, Bobby Charlton.

Gascoigne's shortcomings were, alas, exposed to the nation during the televised Spurs-United match. This immensely gifted yet temperamentally suspect midfield player was shown the red card "for foul and abusive language" as his side lost 2-1.

There was a rush of dismissals as referees have carried out their instructions to get tough with offenders, particularly those guilty of the so-called professional foul.

Stoppage

There was a total of 11 dismissals up and down the land on one day, and later, in an extraordinary third round FA Cup-tie between Blackburn and Liverpool, Moran and Hysen were considered guilty of professional fouls.

Liverpool, the Cup favourites, drew 1-1 with an own goal in stoppage time by Mark Atkins.

Goalkeeper Bruce Grobbelaar said: "I looked at the clock on the stand and saw it was 4.43. I couldn't believe it. We were out of the Cup. When the goal went in I could have jumped over my own crossbar."

The replay brought Liverpool a 3-0 win, but McMahon joined the list of players sent off.

The part-time players of Vauxhall League Woking had a remarkable 4-2 Cup victory away to Second Division West Bromwich Albion.

Tim Buzaglo, whose sporting career includes during World Cup duty for Gibraltar – the CRICKET World Cup, that is – scored three.

Woking's reward was a home tie with Everton, switched to Goodison Park for safety and financial reasons.

Manager Brian Talbot's reward was the sack by an angry West Brom board.

Goodbye ... referee Vic Callow holds up the red card, and that's a black mark for Paul Gascoigne.

LETTERS

We welcome your letters on any topic concerning international football. Write to: Editor's Letters, World Soccer, 25th Floor, King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS. We regret that Information Desk queries (NO long lists, please) can be dealt with only through this column.

Stanley Bowles ... the type of player who could show real skill in those one-on-one confrontations.

Two referees

SIR – As a resident of the USA for the past six years, I feel somewhat starved of top-quality football. I love the game and therefore Italia'90 was like an oasis in the desert for me, even if it was not all we expected.

Since the World Cup there have been numerous "ludicrous" suggestions put forth to make the game more exciting. The feeling is that these ideas (widening the goals, reduction of players, banning the defensive wall for free-kicks, and the abolition of the penalty shootout) have a strong American TV lobby behind them, in anticipation of 1994, and I certainly am fearful of FIFA "Americanising" our game in return for large amounts of dollars.

Being a conservative in this regard I uphold most aspects of the game and its traditions. However, I feel there is a need to retain the much-maligned shootout, and to introduce two new features which should keep interest at a premium.

Firstly a player should be offside only if inside the penalty area. This will eliminate the boring offside tactics of some teams, and the marginal decisions of the abused linesmen.

Neither is this such a radical change to the existing laws, as a penalty kick requires a decision on the proceedings inside an 18 yard area, anyway. Thus the official's area of error has been greatly reduced.

Further, a player receiving a pass outside the area still has some work to do before scoring. The one-on-one confrontations would increase and there would be an increase in the number of George Best/ Stanley Bowles type of player.

The second area that causes most annoyance to the fan is that of poor refereeing. The world has finally reached the conclusion that it is impossible for one man to control a game on his own.

There are vast amounts of money being poured into the game, and the eyes of the world is upon it, so let's have some correct decisions from the middle.

The need is for two referees on the field, one for each half. This would cost more to introduce, but I think we can afford it. – M. STOKES, South Boston, Mass.

No more impact

SIR – I was very sorry to hear that Brazil manager Falcao cannot pick a European-based player for his squad. Not only does it almost make it impossible for Brazil ever to make an impact again on the World Cup, but also, come 1994, the football loving public of the world over will be deprived of watching the skills of Careca etc.. We will probably witness another victory for a machine-like team of West Germans, or should I say just Germans (is there a difference in the team sheet?) over the other more pleasing teams – another boring World Cup. – ANTHONY KAY, Broad Lane, Hale, Altrincham, Cheshire.

First wins

SIR – I am really sorry for the losing teams in penalty shootouts. Why not do away with them and rule that the team who had scored the first goal wins the game?

This would lead to more excitement and perhaps more goals. – YUHEV NAKATANI, Uccle, Belgium.

Hands off

SIR – Problem No. 1 in contemporary soccer is low efficiency, partially caused by the unbalanced offensive and defensive resources of the teams.

No matter how players are placed for the game – even in case of the forgotten W system – the defensive lines gain an advantage of at least one player over the offensive. And this one player, the goalkeeper, enjoys specific privileges: he may keep the ball in his hands.

This insignificant – at first sight – privilage turns out to be a powerful factor in braking the game, decreasing its dynamism, efficiency, entertainment.

In the first place any ball takeover by a goalkeeper with his hands interrupts a natural movement of the ball along the field, which is the essence and the sense of the action.

Each cutting-off of a ball from the game also means a cut-off of field players from the game. Pauses suit fairly well both lazy players and those having an advantage, even of one goal.

In the second place, a goalkeeper when holding the ball has a lot of ways to waste time, to knock down the rhythm and tempo of the opponent's offensive actions.

This puts the offensive side under unequal conditions and leads to the domination of defensive ideology and practice.

To overcome these negative tendencies it would make sense to introduce a ban on goalkeepers catching the ball. They could be given only one advantage – the right to beat off the ball by the hands as well as by other parts of the body, but not to hold it.

The consequences of such a step would be obvious, and this matter needs to be thoroughly analysed both through its strong and weak points. – GIVI GIVISHVILI, Doctor of Sciences, Moscow Maria Raskova Street, USSR.

Go for goals

SIR – I had the opportunity to fulfil my childhood dream of attending the World Cup in Italy last year, and watched 14 games in the month.

The highly-paid Europeans, in general, did not play with the kind of tenacity they show when playing for their club sides (notably in the first and second round of the tournament).

To stimulate the game and stop this nonsense idea about increasing the size of the goal, I have a solution:

Play the first round as it is done normally. In the second round, eliminate the overtime and penalty kicks, and in case of a tie count the goals scored from all previous games. The team with most goals scored then advance.

This set-up would motivate teams to play to win in the first round as well as improving the quality of the games in the second round.

For the third, penalty kicks should be eliminated and the team with most goals scored earlier should advance.

The semi-finals and the third place and final should use overtime and penalty kicks if necessary.

The popularity of football around the world is due to its simplicity. To make the goal larger is not the answer.

To change the rules and basic structure to make the game popular in one country is not right, and creates resentment toward the governing body and the intended subject.

Approaching the issue with an open mind can be the answer.

Monetary awards to teams and players for making it to the higher rounds could enhance performance.

I believe incentives given to teams and players would be met with positive response. – REZA SABA, Mill Road, Edison, New Jersey, USA.

Spain 1982 ... the infamous "collision" between Schumacher of West Germany and Battiston of France during the World Cup semi-finals.

Argie farce

SIR – With reference to the letter in the November issue from Nicolas Kalis, at long last someone seems to have viewed the World Cup final in the same light as myself.

I watched with disbelief as the media crucified Argentina and drooled over West Germany.

Granted, they had 80 per cent of the play, but never looked like scoring. How could Codesal wave play on when Calderon was fouled in the German penalty area, then reduce the game to a farce by giving the Germans a penalty with the worst decision since the Battiston-Schumacher incident in Spain 82? That was another instance when the Germans got away scot free.

One wonders whether Codesal really retired or was sacked by FIFA.

Were Argentina really that bad? I think not. They had a bit of luck on the way, but bad teams don't reach finals in any level. They got past Italy and Yugoslavia on penalties, but that was not luck: they won within the rules laid down.

If the English media wanted to look for bad teams with large amounts of luck, they should have looked at a bit nearer home. Belgium and Cameroon will vouch for that. – KEITH EVANS, Llandudno, Gwynedd.

Vautrot ... a fine referee, now sadly lost to the game.

Honour Vautrot

SIR – The recent UEFA Cup match between Partizan and Internazionale marked the end of the international career of top French referee Michel Vautrot, who announced his international retirement.

The world game has lost the best referee for many years, and sadly it will be a long time before we see another ref with the humour, dedication, discipline and love of football that Vautrot showed.

Although he continues to referee in France, surely it should be possible for FIFA to honour him in some way for the years of service he gave to the world game.

I for one say "Thank you, M. Vautrot" for your services to French and world football. – T. GILKS, Brighton, E. Sussex.

The only hope

SIR – Having followed the progress (or lack of it) of the United States team since 1985, there are a few points that must be addressed if the United States is to field a credible side in time for 1994.

The United States Federation must answer why it is that only college players are considered. Most of our cities have strong ethnic leagues, be they Hispanic, Greek or Portuguese.

Why aren't those players being looked at? Is it a sort of racism? Whether people believe it or not, this country does possess better plays than those who played in Italy. Look at Hugo Perez, a non-college player who should have been on the team. But instead, Mr Gansler picks Neil Corone. Neil Corone!

A better solution to the problems facing the U.S. team is to forget about a professional league. That will never happen. Pick 22 of the best players, not the best college players, and try to fit the team into another country's professional league. That, along with a "B" side playing as many internationals as possible, is the only hope. – JOHN WATSON, Whippowill Road, Old Lyme, Ct. 06371, USA.

Use a TV set

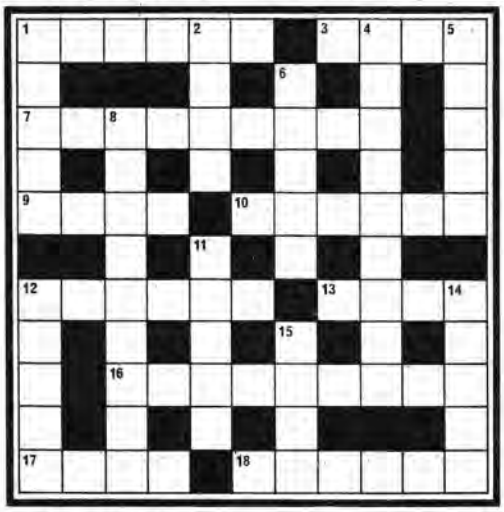
SIR – With FIFA trying to increase the number of goals in football nowadays I have a few ideas: A) Allow more subs on during a game. This would keep the game flowing at a fast pace and give players who are overworked a deserved early bath. B) Instead of abolishing the offside rule only have it count within 18 years of the goal line. This would be too close to goal for defenses to play offside tactics. C) Corners conceded inside the penalty area could be taken five or ten yards nearer to the goal than the modern corner. This would create more goals.

Referees have come in for a lot of stick since the World Cup for some very bad decisions. I know it's been suggested for a referee to carry a small TV around with them but would it be better if the reserve official had it and the referee could refer to it when needed. It could slow the referee down if he carried it anyway.

Finally I would like to compliment you. World Soccer is easily the best book available in the Republic of Ireland. – SEAN LYNCH, Moyvane, Listowel, Co. Kerry, Rep. Ireland.

WORLD SOCCER CROSSWORD

Compiled by Christine Ansell



Across

1. West Germany's team boss, 1964-78 (6)
3. Glentoran's Mersey Street stadium (4)
7. European Champion Cup winners, 1977, 78, 81 and 84 (9)
9. Nickname associated with Dumbarton F.C. (4)
10. Nation triumphant in the 1984 European Championship (6)
12. Former NASL contenders from New England (3,3)
13. Flamengo star forward of Brazil's 1986 World Cup campaign (4)
15. Name by which Scotland's Bayview Park club is familiarly known (3,6)
17. International 'keeper in Steaua's 1989 European Cup final side (4)
18. Coach to PSV Eindhoven (6)

Down

1. Campinas-born midfielder of Sporting Lisbon and Brazil (5)
2. National side formerly managed by Eoin Hand (4)
4. Dundee official – Skol Cup final referee, 1986 and 1987 (8)
5. Home city of Belgium's Standard club (5)
6. Skipper of England's World Cup-winning side (5)
8. European Footballer of the Year, 1988 and 1989 (3,6)
11. Scorer in the 1966 World Cup final (5)
12. Austria's 1990-91 European Cup representatives (5)
14. Danish winger transferred from Old Trafford to Bordeaux in '88 (5)
15. Name of mascot used in advertising Italia '90 (4)

JANUARY CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACCROSS: 3. Beltazar. 7. Cerezo. 8. Kohler. 9. Ettori. 10. Cyril. 11. Schalke. 15. Bertoni. 16. Rocco. 17. Rioch. 21. Avi. 22. Thedell. 23. Larrosa. 24. Soskic.
DOWN: 1. Celtic. 2. Verona. 3. Boniek. 4. Lukic. 5. Ashurst. 6. Avellino. 11. Socrates. 12. Hitchens. 13. Labone. 14. Ebbrell. 18. Owers. 19. Halom. 20. Milan.

PEN PALS

ITALIAN penpals wanted. Must speak and write English. I support Napoli and Atalanta. Rebecca Bowley, 22a Castle Road, Newport, Isle of Wight, P030 10S, England.

FEMALE Rangers fan wants to hear from European soccer fans, male or female. Reply in English to Nicola Paterson, 112 Abbotswell Crescent, Kincorth, Aberdeen, Scotland, ABI SBO.

NIGERIAN student 19, male, seeks penfriends anywhere. All letters answered. Smith Chaifo, 46 Agbado Street, Agbado Market, Benin City, Bendel, Nigeria.

MOROCCAN, 19, interested in football, fishing, swimming and reading, seeks penfriends. Bouchaik Ben Mohamed, 30 Bab Laagihiba, Azemmour, Morocco.

TOTTENHAM fans – please write Silas Ogbonna (aged 17) 4 Alor Street, Fegge, Onitsha, Anambra, Nigeria.

I AM a keen follower of Ajax and Nottingham Forest, 27 and seek penfriends of either sex. Nick Griffin, 32 Denton Drive, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7FS, England.

THERE ARE lots of football fans in Japan. I'm one – a 25-year-old female teacher, looking for penpals. Mika Suzuki, 4-29-7 Shichirigahama-Higashi, Kamakura, Kanaona 248, Japan.

PLEASE write with a photo. I am 21 and want penfriends worldwide. Crispin Kamuntu, c/o PO Box 2939, Bank of Tanzania, Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania.

MALE student, 20, loves football and music. Please write soon. Lafkihi Dries, 4399 Rue 182 Hai Beb Fes, Kenitra, Morocco.

I AM a Ghanaian student, 20, and will exchange letters with anyone, anywhere. David Asibuo, PO Box KW54, Kumasi, Ghana.

And I'm a 17-year-old sixth-former also keen on finding penfriends. All letters answered. Esther Asibuo, PO Box M156, Kumasi, Ghana.

WRITE in French or English – all letters will be answered. My hobbies include soccer and photography. Mounir Bouchaib, Lotissement Benchakroune, Societe Youssoufio, Agemmour, Morocco.

I AM a regular reader, 17, at high school, interested in soccer, music and monies. Kadri Kolade, 3 Kadiri Street, Itire-Surulere, Lagos, Nigeria.

MOROCCAN boy, 15, fond of sport, music, reading and travel, seeks penpals, French or English language. Ahfidi Mahmoud, Groupe Taza 1, Sakhia, Kenitra, Morocco.

I AM 22, like reading and music. Pease write! Paul Gyamfi, PO Box 189, Sunyani, B/A, Ghana.

GERMAN soccer fans please write in English to John Gillespie, 5 Corporation Street, Londonderry, Northern Ireland BT48 6UG.

FOOTBALL FAN, 15, wants to correspond with others worldwide. Osi Osita, 21 St. John's Cross, Onitsua, Anambra, Nigeria.

CHRISTIAN penfriends worldwide should contact Christian Fellowship International, PO Box 12154, Georgetown, Guyana.

EXCHANGES

I WILL exchange lapel badges, postcards and videos with collectors all over the world. Write in English/French/Spanish/ Italian to Enrico Gallina, Via B. Avico No. 11, 27036 Mortara PV, Italy.

IRISH fan seeks to exchange international programmes and videos. Michael Seymour, Shellymarath, Callan Road, Kilkenny, Ireland.

I COLLECT match tickets and am looking for exchanges. Michel Plat, 6 bis Rue de le Frette, 95240 Comeilles en Paris, France.

MAGAZINES, metal badges, pennants, books, scarves, shirts ... I collect and will exchange. Oleg Yunkin, Poste Restante, 252179 Kiev 179, USSR.

PENNANTS, badges and scarves to exchange. Write in English to K. Chatlinski, ul. Jasna 23/5, 70-783 Szczecin, Poland.

I COLLECT badges and other souvenirs, and want to contact other fans of English clubs. Arthur Rendak, ul. Wolnosci 12/9, 43-197 Mikolow 5, Katowickie, Poland.

SOCCER BADGES wanted in exchange for Polish items. Jerzy Matyjasik, PO Box 10, 20-634 Lublin 17, Poland.

ATALANTA fan wants to exchange any soccer material, particularly from England, Holland, Belgium and Ireland. Luca Comelli, Via Morlotti N4, 24030 Brembate Sopra, Bergamo, Italy.

SOUVENIRS wanted for exchange by Dinamo Kiev supporter. Anatolijn Babin, Flat 79, 17-6 Vasilija Porika Street, Kiev 208, 252208, USSR.

MALE and female fans wanted to exchange soccer souvenirs with 15-year-old Nigerian. Augustine Onwuka, PO Box 4385, Onitsha, Anambra, Nigeria.

EXCHANGES wanted with supporters in France, Germany, Italy and Spain -especially if you have Emilio Butragueno's autograph! Andrew Wood (aged 12), 8 Dundrennan, Biddick, Washington, Tyne and Wear, NE38 TTX, England.

I'M LOOKING for metal-badge collectors who will exchange. Zdenek Kucera, Marxova 624, 27801 Kraluty, N/VLT II, Okr Melnik, Czechoslovakia.

I AM 23, support Liverpool, and will exchange Liverpool souvenirs for European souvenirs, especially pennants. Mr N. Spruce, 28c Warbreck Avenue, Liverpool L9 8DJ, England.

FOR SALE

LOW PRICES asked for tickets, programmes, metal badges, scarves, pennants etc from Romania and other countries. Cretoi Teodor, Str. Vulturului, Bl. 9 Ap. 13, Predeal, Romania.

WANTED

WORLD SOCCER for January, February, March, April and June 1990. Gerrard Loughery, 134 Bellwood Street, Shawlands, Glasgow, Scotland.

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BRANCO:

Scotland's Stuart McKimmie tangles with Branco during Italia '90.

Risen-again Brazilian

BY PADDY AGNEW

BRANCO has come again. Claudio Ibrahim Vaz Leal, better known to you as Brazil and Genoa left back Branco, is a very rare phenomenon in Italian soccer. He is a "stranlero" who came, saw and (apparently) failed, only to depart and come again, this time in undoubted triumph.

If just about everything went wrong during Branco's first two Italian seasons with Brescia (86-88), then just about everything has gone right during his first three months with Genoa. Bought last October from Portuguese champions, Porto, for the hefty whack of $3.6 million dollars (US), Branco has become an overnight folk hero in Genoa.

Mind you, he could hardly have stage managed his return to Italian soccer better. In only his third game for Genoa, and with the score at 1-1, he stepped up to take a 73rd minute free-kick against none other than local rivals, Sampdoria. The rest is Genoa folk history.

Sweeter

Branco's viciously struck shot gave Sampdoria's goalkeeper, Gianluca Pagliuca, no chance and Genoa went on to win 2-1. The derby defeat was Sampdoria's first league loss of the season, a consideration, no doubt, that made Branco's goal seem all the sweeter to the Genoa fans.

Subsequent free-kick goals against Parma and Cesena not only helped the side to further wins but they underlined the all-round usefulness of Branco. Even before he hit the back of the net from the free-kick he had won fulsome praise from Genoa's cryptic and craggy coach, Oswaldo Bagnoli:

"He's a naturally left-sided full-back, he's just the player we need."

Indeed when Genoa bought Branco, they thought that they were acquiring a left-sided defender who could also play in midfield and who would be comfortable as an overlapping defender-cum-winger. They also probably hoped that, being a Brazilian, Branco could "play it about a bit".

What Genoa probably did not realise was that they were hiring a free-kick expert. Three free-kick goals later, not just the Genoa directors but also many commentators have already decided that Branco is probably the most deadly specialist in the entire league. No small compliment when you think of the competition such as Messrs Maradona, Gullit, Baggio, Detari, Francescoli, Silas, Kubik, Matthaeus, Sosa etc, etc.

Watching Branco score that all important first goal against Sampdoria, I was reminded of a conversation with Scotland's coach, Andy Roxburgh, in Malta on the eve of the World Cup, Asked to assess the Brazilian side that Scotland were shortly to face in Turin, Roxburgh thought for a second and then said:

"I was in Rio about a month ago to watch Brazil in a friendly and I tell you one thing I remember is Branco's free-kicks. He was taking them from just inside the halfway line and, what's more, the goalkeeper had to work hard to save them."

Another international manager who had long ago remarked on Branco's qualities is Italian coach Azeglio Vicini. A former Brescia player, Vicini recommended Branco to his old club. The transfer was not, however, a success. As Branco diplomatically says these days:

"Brescia were not equipped for the Italian first division."

Indeed, a dreadful Brescia side soon went the way of much newly promoted flesh, returning to the second division from whence they had come. Down into division two with them went Branco.

Other

Then, after a relatively anonymous second division season, Branco left Italy to join Porto. His departure went entirely unlamented. He seemed to be just another name to add to the list of foreigners who have "failed" in Italy, players like the Greek Anastopuolos (Avellino), the Argentinians Borghi (Como) and Dertycia (Florentina), Welshman Rush (Juventus), Belgians Scifo (Internazionale) and Demol (Bologna), Brazilians Edu (Torino), Renato (Roma), Andrade (Roma), Tita (Pescara), and many others.

However, Portuguese championship success with Porto and, more importantly, some fine performances for Sebastiao Lazaroni's Brazil both before and during Italia'90 saw Branco's quotation rise sharply on the player stock market. So much so, that he rejected a lucrative offer from French club Bordeaux last August because he was sure that, sooner or later, he would be back in the "Big Time" in Italy.

The Genoa offer proved him right and made him a richer man since, with an annual pay packet of $400,000 dollars, he is now the highest paid player in the Genoa side. Completely rehabilitated then in Italian soccer, Branco is perhaps the best current example of just how wrong the commentators and some professionals can be. Dismissed to the land of forgotten heroes, he has risen again to prove the old maxim that no matter how good you are, you can do little in a lousy team.

Mind you, for the immediate future, Branco will be a player of interest only to the very best sides around. Welcome back.

STYLE SHOULD BE FIRS SUCCESS SECOND

ERIC BATTY sums up the disturbing, defensive state of the game in Europe

MODERN football is still waiting for a team to lead the way out of the defensive moress into which the game has fallen.

While the administrators of the game huff and puff, trying to seek a new impetus by proposing larger goals and ten-man teams to create more space, and have already amended the offside law to tip the balance against the defenders, we still need a change of heart by the great majority of modern managers. Without it the great days will never come back.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to see how the majority of managers can be persuaded to put quality football first – even above results. I know of some who still insist on winning the right way, with quality football and well conceived goals, but the vast majority are more than content to play defensively, probably with an offside trap or a libero, and win 1-0 by counter-attacking. That, for the majority, is success.

We did not need a fortune teller to predict that goals would be hard to come by in the 1990 World Cup, and in the final analysis the average number of goals fell to such an extent that FIFA tinkered with the offside law.

Taking the year as a whole, the goals tally of West Germany, the World Cup winners, 32 goals for and 14 against spread over 15 games gives them slightly better than a 2-1 average. Italy, with figures of 17 to 3 over 14 games had an average close to 1-0 per game, and they are among the most successful in Europe.

Many of the "lost" fans all over the world would begin watching the game once more if there were more goals scored, bringing in extra much-needed revenue.

My view is slightly different for I want to see good goals created by spell-binding attacking football. I am excited by silky skill and feints; by slick passing movements that devastate a defence and lead inevitably to goals.

The average fan in England, for example, once felt the way I do, but has been weaned away, and those who still watch the game are happy if their team wins. They get excited when high crosses are thrown across the face of the goal and the heads go up, but football was never intended to be played in the air.

The fact that it is, so much, is due to misconceived thinking – that against a massed defence it is impossible to "play" your way through it, and so you must go over it.

The Italians have some quality

Three to one against ... Amores of France is the outsider during a match against Poland. France had the best record of any European country during 1990.

New boss ... Berti Vogts (below) has a tough job in taking over from Franz Beckenbauer as Germany's manager.

Number 19 is Number One ... Schillacci of Italy beats McGrath of the Republic of Ireland.

players, and when they are forced to, but only then, they are capable of playing a brand of attacking football that is pleasing to the eye.

But most of the time they are happy to win 1-0, and will not change even though they came unstuck in 1990 and failed to win the World Cup they should have had, and were expected to win, because of their over-cautious policy.

I do not expect many people will agree with me, but in Europe my choice is the brand of football played by Yugoslavia. I have always regarded them as the Brazil of Europe, and they certainly produce an almost unlimited number of good, skilful players, no matter how many are transferred away.

More and yet more good players take their places, and I have never seen a Yugoslav team that did not at least try to play good, skilful football.

Winning their games is another matter, for they have often been, as they were in 1990, short of a top goalkeeper who was adept at dealing with the high cross and unaffected by a physical challenge. Against this background, now to a look at the 1990 League table for national sides.

France clearly are flattered to be in the top slot, and I recall that in 1989 it was Spain and Czechoslovakia who produced the best overall figures, so it is clear that the table needs to be looked at with a certain degree of knowledge about who played who, and where.

France beat West Germany 2-1 in a friendly match, but had the benefit of playing three relatively easy opponents in Kuwait, Albania and Iceland.

Like France, Italy were unbeaten, and in the World Cup won five and drew one, and that one was vital, for they went out on penalty kicks after drawing 1-1 against the Argentinians.

Since then, the Italians have beaten an out of sorts Holland by 1-0; drawn 1-1 with Hungary, and drawn 0-0 with Russia, all Italian type results, and they rounded off the year with a 4-0 win away to Cyprus.

West Germany in the World Cup were more a strong side than an exciting one. Their manager, Franz Beckenbauer, clearly cared only about results, in spite of his background as a truly great player.

Under new manager Berti Vogts I have hopes for the Germans, for Vogts played all his football under the late, great, Hennes Weisweiler, and together with Rainer Bonhof seems to have acquired some of the understanding of his master.

Holland and Russia were deserving finalists in the 1988 European Championship, but for different reasons they fell from grace and were both among the teams that flopped in 1990, and in the World Cup.

The Russians failed because they kept all their old players together for too long, but now, under former Dynamo Kiev international winger Anatoly Bishovets there are signs that they will come again.

Command

The Dutch brought about their own downfall, with some of their key players wanting to run the show, pick the team and lay down the tactics. But with Rinus Michels back in command, a man who will stand no nonsense, they should rise again.

There are too many good players in Holland for them to be down for long.

The highlight of the year, of course, should have been the World Cup, but it was a poor one. Proof of that lies in the fact that a team as bad as Argentina reached the final; a team as poor as the Republic of Ireland did so well, and that fact that an England team of quite ordinary talents took fourth place.

So to an overall look at the 1990 table once more. As I see it, while winning away to the minnows can often be difficult these days because of defensive tactics, there is a clearly defined group of sub-standard teams who always figure in the bottom half of these tables.

Then, among the more successful we can make this assessment:

Truly international teams of skill and talent: None.

Teams difficult to beat: West Germany, Italy, England, the Republic of Ireland.

International results table, Europe 1990.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	%
France	7	6	1	0	12	3	92
West Germany	15	10	4	1	32	14	80
East Germany	7	5	1	1	13	9	78.5714
Italy	14	8	6	0	17	3	78.5711
Portugal	4	2	2	0	3	1	75
Rep.Ireland	13	5	7	1	15	5	73
England	15	8	5	2	20	12	70
Greece	8	5	1	2	17	6	68
Spain	11	7	1	3	26	11	68
Yugoslavia	11	6	2	3	16	11	63
Switzerland	9	5	1	3	14	11	61
Hungary	10	5	2	3	18	12	60
Rumania	15	7	4	4	17	12	60
Norway	10	5	2	3	21	13	60
Russia	16	8	3	5	24	14	59
Denmark	13	6	3	4	16	9	57
Scotland	11	5	2	4	12	12	54
Sweden	12	5	2	5	21	14	50
Wales	6	3	0	3	7	7	50
Poland	13	4	4	5	15	15	46
Czechoslovakia	12	5	1	6	15	15	45.8
Austria	12	4	3	5	14	15	45.8
Holland	11	3	4	4	17	9	45.4
Finland	8	1	5	2	7	13	43
Belgium	11	3	3	5	14	14	40.8
North Ireland	5	1	2	2	4	6	40.0
Iceland	6	2	0	4	7	10	33
Bulgaria	5	1	1	3	5	7	30
Israel	5	1	0	4	6	13	20
Malta	8	0	2	6	4	22	12
Turkey	5	0	1	4	1	11	10
Luxembourg	3	0	0	3	5	6	0
Cyprus	3	0	0	3	2	11	0
Albania	4	0	0	4	0	14	0
Also played:							
Faroe Isles	2	1	0	1	2	4	
San Marino	2	0	0	2	0	10	

Holland ahead ... in this scene from the European Championship defeat of the Soviets. But they are not on top any more.

GERMANY BY ARTHUR ROTMIL

Berti's boys make a good start

Miss ... Klinsmann's penalty is saved by Walker during the Germany-Switzerland match in Stuttgart.

GERMAN football ended the momentous and triumphant year 1990 with another historic milestone and a memorable victory.

For the first time since November 22, 1942, when they played against Slovakia in Bratislava, an all-German team took the field again.

This followed the merger of the two German football federations from West and East, which took place seven weeks after the two countries were politically reunited.

When the prestige meeting of the West and East German national sides scheduled for November 21 was called off because of fears of hooliganism, a celebratory match was arranged instead, symbolically against Switzerland.

Selected

The Swiss were the first nation to play Germany, back in 1908, the first to provide opposition after World War One, in 1920, and the first to break the ban on relations with the post-World War Two West Germany, then ostracised by most of the sporting world. That encounter took place on November 22, 1950, in Stuttgart, the appropriate venue for another international.

It was the 45th match between the two countries – no other nation has met the Germans so often – and a marvellous occasion for the new national team manager, Berti Vogts.

He had selected a squad of 25, including five former East German internationals. The first to make his debut in this newly created all-German team was midfielder Matthias Sammer, now with the local VfB Stuttart, who replaced Thomas Strunz of Bayern Munich, out because of an operation on his jaw.

World Cup hero Andy Brehme of Internazionale was absent with a knee injury, but had a worthy deputy in Thomas Helmer from Borussia Dortmund, normally a sweeper-cum-stopper, in his second international.

Otherwise nine world champions were on view, and goals from Rudi Voeller in the first minute, substitutes Karl-Heinz Riedle (66) and Andreas Thom (75), and a marvellous volley from captain Lothar Matthaus (85) brought a 4-0 win.

Not surprising. Germany last lost to Switzerland 34 years ago!

The most sensational entry was celebrated by the ex-Easterner Thom (now with Bayer Leverkusen), who scored within 25 seconds of going on as sub for Sammer.

Germany's best were 'keeper Bodo Illgner, defender Stefan Reuter and strikers Voeller and Riedle.

Hit ... Voeller hurts the Swiss defence to score his first-minute goal for the new all-German team.

Hinted

Klinsmann missed a penalty, or rather substitute Philippe Walker saved, and the German defence was not always secure (too many parties before the match!), but the half-frozen 20,000 spectators saw a strong German performance that hinted at more success in future.

Vogts said: "It was an opportunity to welcome the players from the East to the squad, to say 'thank you' to our world champions and the loyal fans, and to bid farewell to Franz Beckenbauer."

But he was not happy with the extensive pre-match celebrations and said: "There will never again be such scant preparation for an international."

Vogts is taking on a mammoth task. Each of his four predecessors – Sepp Herberger, Helmut Schoen, Jupp Derwall and Beckenbauer – won either the World Cup or the European Championship, or both.

And the German fans, among the most demanding in the world, will expect at least another major title from the immensely popular Berti, who was 44 on December 30.

Bremen lead – or do they?

THE Bundesliga closed for the winter break with the first half incomplete, because four matches had to be postponed through bad weather. These will be played before the start to the second phase, due on February 23.

The so-called "Herbstmeister" (autumn champions) are Werder Bremen, who held a one-point advantage over title-holders Bayern Munich, followed by Kaiserslautern, Eintracht Frankfurt and Borussia Dortmund.

Bremen should feel confident, for in 20 out of 27 Bundesliga seasons the team leading at halfway became champions. But if Kaiserslautern beat Koln in one of the outstanding fixtures, they will be leaders on goal difference.

While Bremen's strength is their home form (only one point dropped), Kaiserslautern have the best attack in away matches – 18 goals in eight games, more than Bayern and Bremen put together.

Dortmund would have been top if their away form, the best in the League, had been matched at home. They had 34,848 spectators per home game and only Bayern drew more, with 36,000.

Despite a record 24 sendings-off (only 17 last term at this stage), the total of bookings dropped from 531 to 475.

Wohlfarth (Bayern) was top scorer with 11 goals. Criens (Borussia Monchengladbach) and Rufer (Bremen) had nine each.

CLUBS HELP THE HUNGRY

AT LEAST 15 First Division and six Second Division clubs of the German Bundesliga, as well as thousands of fans, have been rushing aid to help the USSR.

Substantial amounts raised from various sporting events and direct collections, were paid into a relief fund, and thousands of food parcels have been sent or are being prepared for dispatch to the stricken population.

Depressing reports and TV pictures showing the ever-lengthening queues for food outside state shops, often with empty shelves, and the hardship experienced by millions of ordinary people in Russian cities, have stirred the conscience of the German nation.

And the football clubs were not slow to respond.

Hoardings

The country's most successful and richest outfit, Bayern Munich, organised a benefit match by inviting the Soviet national team to play in the Olympic stadium.

The game was shown live on German TV, which paid £100,000. Commercial firms using the 30 hoardings for perimeter advertising contributed an extra £8,000 each. Lufthansa and Aeroflot flew the Soviet internationals free of charge, while the Hotel Sheraton in Munich provided free accommodation.

The German FA (DFB) and the Olympic stadium authorities waived any fees. All the proceeds were passed on.

The event raised 1.24 million marks (over £400,000). The guests included German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who paid £10 for his ticket. Curiously enough the referee was the other Helmut Kohl, the Austrian well known from the World Cup.

In the first half only Bayern pros were in action. Afterwards several players from the other local club, 1860 Munich, were used.

Despite temperatures well below freezing point, 8,000 fans turned up and saw a 1-1 draw. The first "goal" was scored by Chancellor Kohl. During the interval he beat Bayern's international 'keeper, Raimond Aumann, from the penalty spot.

But the result did not matter. The size of the financial contribution did.

Of the other clubs, VfB Stuttgart were due to play Dynamo Kiev, while balls, jerseys and other souvenirs were sold.

Bayer Leverkusen organised a benefit match against the USSR 1989 champions Spartak Moscow (currently Champions' Cup quarter-finalists), with the help of sponsors, and guaranteed a profit of at least £33,000.

Koln fans organised a massive collection, while the club and the local Red Cross also chipped in. The money went to Volgograd, a city twinned with Cologne.

Hamburger SV raised £5,000 from a match between entertainment personalities, Werder Bremen arranged the delivery of food parcels to 500 addresses in Moscow, and all 18 junior teams at St. Pauli made up 38 parcels.

Kaiserslautern and Borussia Dortmund devised collections inside their grounds, Bayer Uerdingen helped a local radio station with a convoy with groceries.

Second Division Preussen Munster had an excess charge of one mark on admission tickets for one match: the amount obtained will be doubled by the club. The team also raised cash from an autograph hour, sending the proceeds to Munster's twin city, Rjasan.

This praiseworthy action is intended as a "Thank You" to Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev, whose efforts were instrumental in reuniting East and West Germany politically.

Chancellor Kohl called the enterprise "a sign of human solidarity with suffering people".

Not this time ... but Wohlfarth of Bayern is the Bundesliga's top scorer.

Rostock look favourites for the switch

BY BOB VAUGHAN

BACK in the ex GDR the discussion continues. Which clubs will make it to the Bundesliga or to BL 2?

Not many are anywhere near ready. Autumn leaders Hansa Rostock play attacking football but look naive when measured against the West, and there are doubts about libero Maerz at top level.

A midfielder is needed, and manager Reinders is thought to be looking at Hertha's Kruse.

Rostock could make the all-German top flight come the late spring, though strengthening will be essential if they are to have any hope of staying up.

The "Yellow and Blacks" from the Elbe, now renamed First FC Dynamo Dresden, and under former player Haefner, look Bundesliga material, at least at home.

Goals for are the highest in the Oberliga but only one away win looks ominous, and there is trouble behind the scenes and on the management front.

Haefner is looking at Erfurt's Vogel and Frankfurt's Rath but the financial situation is unclear. Inquiries are being made into the resting place of some of the money paid for Sammer by VfB Stuttgart. It seems to have gone west in another sense.

Lok Leipzig and Carl-Zeiss Jena recovered from early-season foibles but look to have too much ground to make up for anything other than a place in BL 2. Magdeburg's chances are comparable but newcomers Sachsen and the Stasi-tainted FC Berlin appear doomed.

Happier

The Leipzig club have appointed a "sensible" manager, Engel, to replace Hartwig, while former head coach Bogs has descended from the directors' box to try to help save what remains to be salvaged from a disintegrating FCB set-up.

Bogs probably will get his wish to spend more time with his family: there is unlikely to be an FCB much longer.

On a happier note, ex-GDR referees enjoy respect and this has been acknowledged by ten of them being granted the status to handle Bundesliga matches.

Managers and coaches are less pleased. Ex-national team defender Dixie Doerner is the only East German to be taken on at DFB headquarters in Frankfurt-on-Main, and no coach from the East has landed a top club post in the west.

ROMANIA BY BOB VAUGHAN

Big boys have to struggle

SOME topsy-turvy results in the Cup rounded off the domestic half-season.

Dinamo had to visit Third Division Electoputere in Craiova and managed only a 1-0 win.

Rapid also struggled, in Brasov, managing to scrape past Metrom 4-3 on penalties. In another "C" versus "A" encounter Corvinul came unstuck, going down to Automecanica in Resita by the only score.

Penalties

The only other "A" casualty, Progresult Braila, tumbled 2-0 at Cavalerii Fluierului, not one of the better known sides in Europe.

Steaua, too did not have a good day but just made it. FC Bihor failed 4-3 on penalties, so the rich get richer.

That was also the case for the Romanians when San Marino went to Bucharest for the European Championship qualifying tie. After two defeats, at Hampden and at home to Bulgaria, this was manager Mircea Radulescu's last chance to keep the Euro '92 flag flying, and it turned out not to be a difficult task.

Sabau ... quick goal in the 6-0 rout of San Marino.

Sabau's first-minute strike put the Romanians on the road a 6-0 win, and two points.

The result means that home wins in forthcoming games with the Scots and Swiss could lead to a showdown match with the Bulgarians in Sofia in what could become a very open group.

Radulescu's problem may be how to integrate the overseas players while keeping the newcomers content.

ITALY BY KEIR RADNEDGE

Casiraghi puts Toto in the shade

FORGET about Toto Schillaci. Italian league leaders Juventus have discovered a new goal-grabbing hero.

He is Pierluigi Casiraghi, who enhanced his growing reputation by shooting a hat-trick in a 5-1 away victory over Pisa which lifted Juve back to the league leadership, ahead of Internazionale on goal difference.

The other two goals both fell to £8 million Roberto Baggio.

Casiraghi's feat was all the more remarkable considering that he had been out injured until only a week previously when he signalled his return to duty with the decisive goal in a controversial victory over Napoli. That was a game marred by the first-half expulsion, for a professional foul on Julio Cesar, of the Napoli goalkeeper Giovanni Galli.

Surgery

Against Pisa, the 21-year-old Casiraghi opened his account by heading home a 20th-minute free kick from German midfielder Thomas Haessler. The little German helped create Casiraghi's second and third goals in the second half.

Until the end of last year Casiraghi had been a sort of Italian Bryan Robson, repeatedly troubled by dislocated shoulders. In November he underwent surgery to tighten up the muscles and his comeback could not have been better timed as Juventus contested the league leadership with Inter and Sampdoria. Coach Gigi Maifredi said: "He's just the man we needed to strengthen a forward line made up of lightweights."

Casiraghi has some way to go to catch up nine-goal league scoring leaders Baggio and Inter's Lothar Matthaus. But both Baggio and Matthaus include five penalties in their record and have played seven more matches than the Juve starlet, who has earned favourable – and inevitable – comparisons with the great John Charles.

National team manager Azeglio Vicini saw Casiraghi strike his hat-trick against Pisa and can hardly fail to have been impressed at a time when neither Schillaci nor Sampdoria's Gianluca Vialli has been in the best of form.

Slipped

One admirer is Gigi Riva, one of the most popular and successful of Italian goal-scorers, who led the Azzurri attack at the 1970 World Cup. Riva said: "I like Casiraghi because he is aggressive and fearless in the penalty area, essential qualities."

As for Schillaci, he has claimed only four goals so far – three of those in one game against Roma – and has failed to repeat his scoring feats of last summer in international appearances against Hungary, the Soviet Union and Cyprus.

Newly recrowned world champions Milan moved up into third place thanks to a 2-0 home victory over Bari built on foundations laid by a 31st-minute opening goal from Ruud Gullit. Promoted Parma surprisingly pushed their way up into fourth place following a 1-0 win over bottom club Cesena. But Cup-winners' Cup holders Sampdoria slipped down to fifth after a 1-0 defeat at Lecce.

Napoli remain out of sight in the lower reaches of the table, with most of their headlines being provoked by the continuing Diego Maradona farce. A massive £35,000 fine from the league for his early-season indiscipline goaded him into taking the next place home to Buenos Aires.

Maradona told a press conference there, at Ezeiza airport: "If Napoli refuse to release me from my contract at the end of the season I will quit soccer. I can't take playing in Italy any more. Before this I said I wanted to come home to Argentina. Now I am sure. I have talked about this with the Napoli president (Corrado Ferlaino) and he told me not to worry, that at the end of the season in June we would talk again.

"If I am allowed to play in Argentina, for Boca Juniors, I'm sure there won't be any economic problems."

Casiraghi ... the latest scoring hero at Juventus.

YUGOSLAVIA BY TIMOTHY COLLINGS

Partizan threat to city rivals

RED STAR Belgrade reached the winter break in Yugoslavia in their familiar position on top of the league and looking forward to a European Cup quarter-final clash against Dynamo Dresden.

But perhaps the most impressive performance in the first half of the season came from city rivals Partizan who recovered from a mediocre start – they were seventh in the table in early November – to reach the closedown in second place.

Efforts

At the break, Red Star led with 29 points from 18 games, with Partizan seven behind, thanks in no small part to the goalscoring efforts of Djurdjevic, who was second top scorer with nine behind the outstanding Pancev of Red Star.

Pancev led the scorers with 15 goals and will clearly be the main danger to Dynamo Dresden next month when Red Star will be the only Yugoslav side left in the three European competitions.

GREECE BY LOUIS ECONOMOPOULOS

Fan, 16, killed by firework

THE BIG Athens/Piraeus derby between AEK and Olympiakos was a tragic accident from start to finish.

Before the game a 16-year-old fan was killed after being struck by a firework; then the match itself had to be abandoned six minutes from time amid general confusion and panic after a smoke bomb was thrown on to the pitch at the Nea Philadelphia stadium and the police responded by firing tear-gas into the crowd.

The fan who died was later identified as Giorgis Panaytou.

Olympiakos, joint league leaders with Panathinaikos, were leading 2-1 at the time the game was brought to a halt.

HUNGARY BY BRIAN O'SULLIVAN

Meszoly's methods start to work

HUNGARY, despite conceding two goals in beating Cyprus 4-2, ended 1990 with a semblance of stability.

That may sound impossible, given the modest position and lack of confidence in the Hungarian game as well as the fact that Kalman Meszoly, the manager of the national team, has called up 48 players in the 11 matches played since he began his second term.

Yet for the three most recent matches, all in a European Championship qualifying group that Hungary cannot be expected to win, as many as nine players started all of them.

These included the five attacking – midfield or forward-players and, interestingly, all of these are playing in western Europe.

Gyorgy Bognar, surprisingly strong and confident in the midfield, combined with the inexperienced Emil Lorincz in a mobile team against Italy, who had to scramble in the second half for a 1-1 draw in Budapest.

This pair, plus the forward Jozsef Kiprich, missed the friendly international against England, as did Jozsef Szalma, the Tatabanya defender, and Lajos Detari.

The "nation's savour" has not appeared in the national team since last March in a friendly against France. Since then he has moved from Olympiakos of Athens to Bologna, who are struggling in Serie A of the Italian League, and was troubled by a hamstring muscle injury at the time of the match against England.

He was outstanding in the second leg of the UEFA Cup second round match against Dundee United but has not always shown the same commitment in the national strip.

Another forward absent, is Istvan Vincze, who also has experience of Italian football, with Lecce. He, too, has had injuries, of a more unsettling nature than Detari, and is being rehabilitated successfully at Budapest Honved.

Cautious

Their manager, Gyorgy Mezey, introduced him to international football but he last appeared for Hungary in October 1989, in a 2-2 home draw with Spain in a World Cup qualifying group match.

If the national team have not truly "given the fans back their faith in Hungarian football" – as Meszoly suggested after the draw with Italy – he has shown, nonetheless that his preparations, including a necessarily cautious approach with a weakened team against England, have been successful.

Something of his football philosophy and style is rubbing off on the players too. He was an outstanding defender – who also had the technique and passing ability to be creative influence – during his playing days.

Hungary may not be unbeaten in their next three competitive matches but they can be trusted to perform without embarrassment.

Ference Meszaros, the former national team goalkeeper, has been dismissed as manager of Vasas and replaced by Imre Gelei. He had been at Siofok last season and was to have taken up a post in Kuwait in August, just when that country was invaded by Iraq.

Imre (Emerich) Jenei, who guided Steaua Bucharest to be the first eastern European country to win the European Champions' Cup in 1986, became a free adviser to Debrecen, on the other side of the Romanian border from where he is living in Oradea (Nagyvarad to Hungarians), for the last three rounds of the autumn season.

Then he and Karoly Oroszhegyi, of Nemzeti Sport, organised a match between Romanians playing in the first and second divisions against Ferencvaros in aid of the Romanian charity effort.

Detari ... one of Hungary's leading talents.

HOLLAND BY SIMON KUPER

FEYENOORD SHAMBLES

A great club now at rock bottom

FEYENOORD'S players have been living in terror. Results reached such a disastrous level, with 13 points from the first 15 matches, that the club's directors started a campaign against their own team.

Every player of the once-great side was hauled before the board and shouted at. Some were told to find a new employer.

Perhaps they are the lucky ones. The directors themselves, of course, accept no blame for the club's fall into the hardest of times.

In 1970 Feyenoord beat Celtic 2-1 to win the Champions' Cup. In 1974 they beat Spurs and became the first Dutch club to take the UEFA Cup (at the match in Rotterdam Tottenham fans gave the first display of football hooliganism ever seen in Holland).

Until then, Feyenoord and Ajax had dominated the Dutch league, and Feyenoord were by far the most popular club in the country.

They regularly drew 60,000 to matches, and when they brought the Champions' Cup home to Rotterdam hundreds of thousands packed the city's central square.

All this makes the club's current state so sad. When Feyenoord are debilitated, the Dutch league is only half as much fun.

Shortly before Christmas when Ajax went to Rotterdam and hammered their favourite rivals 4-0, Ajax fans, smug at the top of the table, chanted "First Division, First Division" at the Rotterdammers. But if Feyenoord were to go down, which is perfectly possible, Ajax would miss them most.

Even this year, Feyenoord-Ajax was sold out, and the whole nation looks forward for months to meetings between the two.

The cause of Feyenoord's ever-faster fall is the incredible transfer policy. The board changes almost every year, yet whoever the new directors are, Feyenoord contrive to remain Holland's worst-run institution.

The current situation is typical: most of the players told by the board to leave were signed by that very same board not that long ago.

Gerrit Plomp, Piet Keur and the Czech international Stanislav Griga are among the best players in Holland but they do not fit into Feyenoord's team: hardly their fault.

Plomp had spent his entire career at libero when the club's current technical director, Ger Lagendijk, took him to Rotterdam. Presumably Lagendijk had a reason for signing him, but he split his time at Feyenoord between midfield and the bench.

Lagendijk, unsurprisingly disappointed with Plomp's performance, has ordered him to leave. One longs for the day when they start selling technical directors.

Formation

Feyenoord's manager, the incommunicative Swede Gunder Bengtsson, seems to have very little say over which players are hired and fired.

Ton Lokhoff was the first man to leave the club: he joined his hometown side NAC Breda, over the winter break. NAC are pushing for promotion to the Premier Division, and Lokhoff can regard the move almost as a step upwards.

He was right-back in Rotterdam, to fit in with Bengtsson's rigid and unsuccessful 4-4-2 formation, yet even so Lokhoff was one of Feyenoord's better players. How typical, then, that they should sell him.

Lokhoff can look to many examples of men whose careers revived the moment they left Rotterdam. Luton's Lars Elstrup and Chelsea's Kenneth Monkou were both off-loaded by Feyenoord. Monkou cost Chelsea £100,000 – now Liverpool and Manchester United want him.

Israel ... with the Champions' Cup after Feyenoord's 1970 victory.

Players who join Feyenoord, on the other hand, almost always lose form immediately. Henk Fraser, a promising young international defender who came from Roda Kerkrade this year, is a case in point.

Fraser says that after a couple of months at Feyenoord he was suddenly hit by lethargy and felt physically weak; moreover, he says, others suffered the same problem. Clearly he is describing the effects of stress.

Feyenoord's signings have to cope with overblown expectations. Fraser recently broke a hand when he punched a wall after being sent off.

Thousands of people still support Feyenoord, and the club have managed to collect well over £1 million from businesses to fund new signings.

Many players are still keen to join Feyenoord because of the old glory. But that might soon be over: already, any player old enough to remember that Champions' Cup would have to be at least 26.

Feyenoord have considered several Ajax reserves, and are now chasing Rob Witschge, the outside-left Ajax sold to Saint Etienne of France less than two years ago.

I hope for Feyenoord's sake that they fail to sign Witschge: an imaginative but inconsistent, happy-go-lucky young winger is hardly the player to pull Feyenoord's demoralised side together.

RODA BUY BEEN

DUTCH clubs have been unusually active on the transfer market. Roda Kerkrade paid Pisa £150,000 for Mario Been, who grew up at Feyenoord, won one cap, and joined Pisa in 1988.

When he found himself on the bench in Italy he elected to go home. The question is whether the noisy Been will be happy in the reserved south of Holland.

Twente Enschede rejected Been and signed 20-year-old Arthur Numan from Haarlem instead. He is captain of Holland's Under-21s, and has the flair that Twente lack.

The club also bought Hrusef Musemic, a 29-year-old striker, from Red Star Belgrade. Musemic has one cap for Yugoslavia.

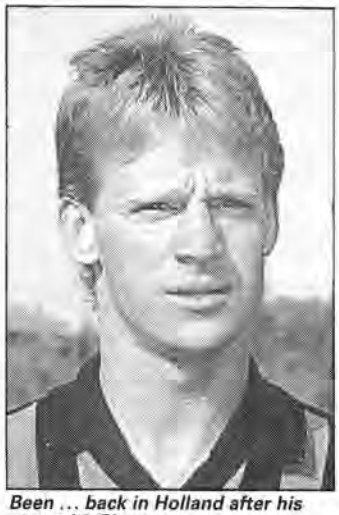
RKC Waalwijk have hired Dirk Goosens, whose solitary cap was for Belgium. He moved north of the border from FC Antwerp because he feels that referees have a collective jaundiced eye on him. "But everyone I spoke to praised him as a footballer," says RKC manager Leo van Veen.

Mark Verkuyl has moved from Holland to Belgium, leaving Ajax for AA Ghent. Verkuyl was one of the many first-class players left on the bench by Ajax's thrilling football.

Ajax are completing plans to build a hypermodern stadium, to be ready by 1994, but are worried by the attempts of a group of Amsterdam businessmen to found a new club, who would share the new arena.

The new team would be called FC Cruyff, and you can guess who the manager would be. Ajax are surely right to argue that Amsterdam has too few fans to support two big clubs.

Fittingly, the new stadium is to take over from Feyenoord's ground as Holland's national stadium.



Been ... back in Holland after his stay with Pisa.

PORTUGAL BY TIMOTHY COLLINGS

MANUEL'S SURPRISE SUCCESS

ARTUR JORGE may remain the top-rated coach in Portugal, but his respected reputation as the man in charge of league leaders Porto and the national team could soon be rivalled by the emerging talent of new success Victor Manuel.

The Penafiel boss gained fame and headlines when his unsung team held Jorge's to only their second draw of the season – a 0-0 stalemate at the turn of the year – and also ended a Porto run of five successive wins.

For Porto it was an unexpected check to their progress, their first goalless draw and only the fourth point they had dropped in 20 league matches this season. Little wonder then that Victor Manuel's record since taking charge of Penafiel was quickly put under the microscope.

Penafiel had begun the season horrendously. After six games they were rooted at the bottom with only one point, but by the 20-match mark (just past half-way in the season) they had climbed to midway in the table with 19 points.

Gomes ... evergreen striker who is still scoring regularly.

Victor Manuel, who took over when the team were in the depth of their doldrums, had effected a transformation, changing a team without pattern and little or not confidence into an organised and competitive outfit which had banished all the early relegation fears.

Porto's slip at Penafiel gave Benfica a chance to close the gap at the top to one point that weekend, thus keeping alive a close and fascinating race for the championship in which the evergreen striking skill of Fernando Gomes has kept Sporting Lisbon involved in third place.

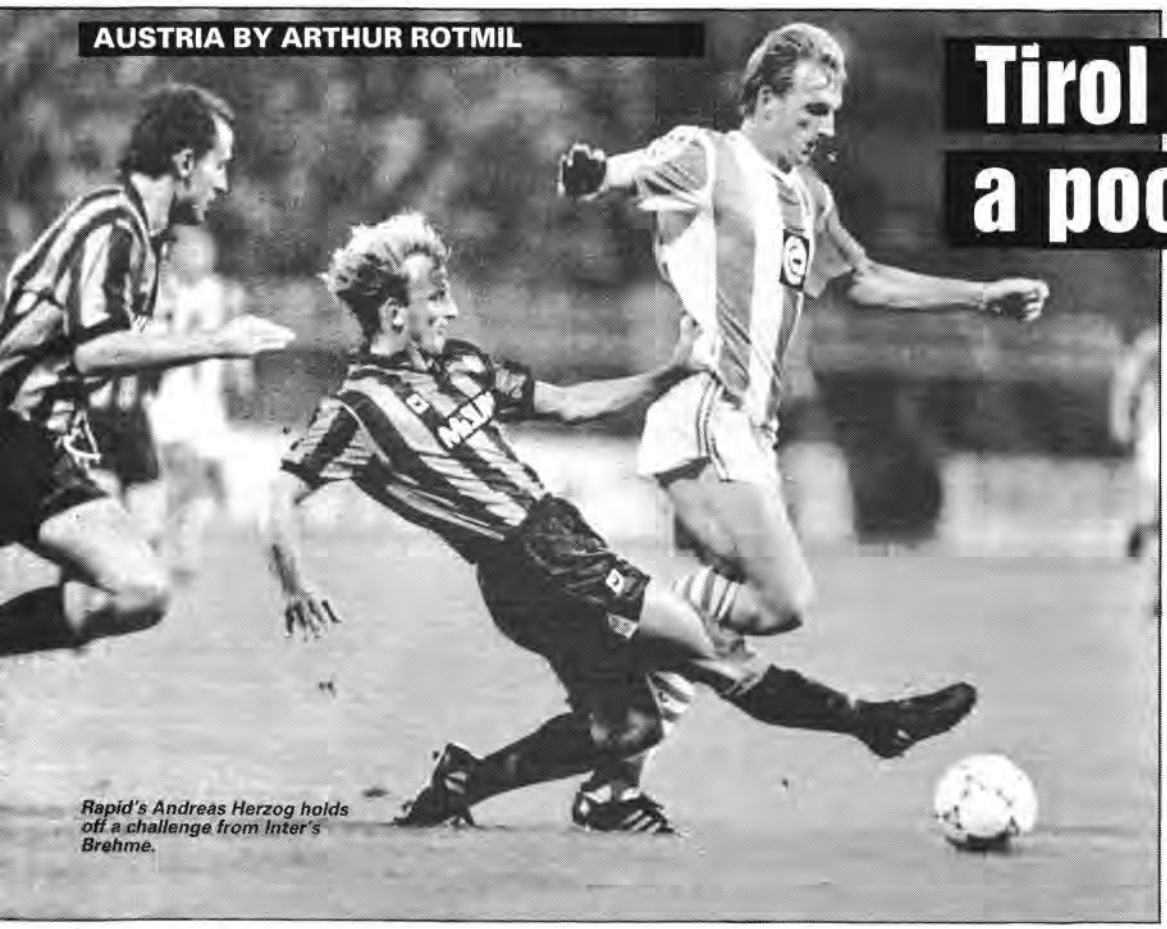
With 14 goals at the half-way stage, Gomes was leading scorer again together with Rui Aguas of Benfica, but more importantly to Gomes, his efforts had kept Sporting in touch with the leaders with 30 points, five behind Benfica, six behind Porto.

For Jorge's team, however, the passage ahead may not be easy as, apart from the sustained challenge of Benfica in the league, they face the toughest possible task in the European Cup quarter-finals next month when they meet Bayern Munich.

Sporting, with Gomes enjoying his Indian summer, clash with Bologna in what promises to be an outstanding UEFA Cup semi-final.

AUSTRIA BY ARTHUR ROTMIL

Tirol best of a poor bunch



Rapid's Andreas Herzog holds off a challenge from Inter's Brehme.

AUSTRIAN football began the customary winter break looking back ruefully at a disastrous year at international level. Even the improved form of the top three clubs in the last qualifying championship round could not compensate for what had gone before.

Title-holders FC Tirol crushed Krems 4-0 and finished at the top as "winter champions". FK Austria demolished First Vienna by 6-2 away and claimed second place, while Rapid, 5-0 winners over Wiener Sportklub, took third spot.

But the fans can't forget the miserable displays of the national side in the World Cup and in the European Championship qualifying series that followed. As for the European club competitions, one failure tracked another.

In those final matches a Czech, Vaclav Danek, scored a hat-trick for Tirol, Soviet newcomers Narbekovas and Ivanauskas hit four goals between them for FK Austria, and the Norwegian Jan-Aage Fjortoft got two for Rapid.

One look at the current scoring list in the First Division says everything: 1. Danek 20 goals; 2. Oliver Bierhoff, a German with Austria Salzburg 16; 3. Fjortoft, 13. The first Austrian, Peter Pacult of Tirol on 12, was fourth.

Bierhoff, a heading specialist, is one of the great discoveries of the season, and his goals were instrumental in helping Salzburg to fifth place.

This resulted in a crowd boom in the city of Mozart.

The biggest flop? Hugo Maradona, Diego's younger brother, with Rapid. He didn't play the full 90 minutes in any match.

FK Austria gathered a lot of points with a poor squad, but the fans deserted them.

Tirol were still suffering from their soul-destroying 9-1 defeat by Real Madrid. The players fear that their venerable manager, Ernst Happel, has lost confidence in their ability.

The same can be said of stars elsewhere, like Rapid's international playmaker Andy Herzog, whose erratic displays were driving his manager and mentor, Hans Krankl, to despair.

BULGARIA BY BOB VAUGHAN

'Professors' show how to hit back

TWO CUP rounds have reduced the number of survivors to eight for the second half of the season.

With a two-leg basis and sudden death by penalties in force, there have been plenty of thrills and spills.

Third Division club Svoboda eliminated the relatively mighty Cernomorets. In the all-First Division clashes, however, shootouts were required. Slavia won through 4-2 after a goalless draw Dunav, and Beroe won 4-3 after a 0-0 result at Miner.

The most extraordinary tie involved Sliven and Third Division Akademik V, known as the Professors.

Sliven won 3-1 at home and made it 4-1 on aggregate in the return, but Akademik won the match 6-3 and the tie 7-6.

Formed

Levski, who struggled at Rodopa, and Slavia must now be the favourites for the EC 2 place next season, but who knows with three Third Division sides, Akademik, Svoboda and Neftochimik, still in the running?

Off the field the football world continues to protest against government decisions to remove sport from the list of activities eligible for tax deductions.

At the same time the committee formed to challenge the Bulgarian Football Union to resign or reform, preferably the former, go on with the protest campaign.

Slavia and Levski are trying to become independent organisations free the "sponsorship" of the Civil Guard and the Ministry of the Interior.

Hristo Stoichtov ... suspension.

Bulgaria's 30th Player of the Year award went, as expected, to Hristo Stoichkov, but then came the news of his six-month suspension for stamping on a referee's foot during a match with Barcelona.

Stoichkov received 134 votes to head off Todorov of Lok Sofia (107) and fellow exile Penev of CF Valencia (60).

Balakov, who has signed for Sporting Lison after running the midfield for Etyr, was fourth, and the former CSKA firebrand, Ivanov, was fifth. He left for Betis Seville after being suspended by his home club.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

THE surprising and unlikely Winter Kings are the West Bohemian border club Union Cheb, who ended the autumn half of the season – in front of only 1,928 spectators – with a 1-0 home win over Nitra.

Bertalan's winning goal came only six minutes from the whistle.

Union are a side of unknowns who were until recently the other "Little Dukls" in the Czechoslovak League. The sole star is the manager, former Sparta player, Dusan Uhrin, who spent part of his career at even lesser known former Division Three club, Dynamo Kobylisy in the northern Prague suburbs.

Novices

His success at Cheb is against all the odds. Before the 1990-91 term began, seven players who had helped the club gain promotion from Division Two in the Czech National League, left, among them Union's best performer, libero Jeslinek.

A new team had to be formed but Uhrin's novices have come up trumps. Unfortunately for them, Uhrin is to take over at Sparta from Vaclav Jezek, who is finally retiring.

Sparta, losing several internationals to foreign clubs, are in fifth place, though Cheb have only a three-point lead.

The final round of eight games produced only 15 goals, 30 yellow cards and one red, and 17,641 frozen spectators.

Overall gates are down by some 20 per cent; fewer than half a million fans attended league games in the autumn, an average of around 4,000, which means top football is heading for financial disaster.

On a more happy note the position is far from hopeless in the European Championship qualifying group with all still to play for.

Top players are still in demand abroad and the old guard have been eased out of positions of influence.

BY BOB VAUGHAN

POLAND

JACEK ZIOBER is the Polish Footballer of the Year, although he no longer plays in his homeland.

His displays with the national team and with Montellier of France enabled him to top the poll, organised by Sport magazine, and another one run by Pilka Nozna.

Ziober played for Lodz before moving to France: the runner-up in the Sport poll, Roman Kosecki, has now left Legia for Galatasaray of Turkey.

The Polish squad rely heavily on Ziober, a skilful, determined technician and on-field influence.

English and Republic of Ireland fans should be able to see him in this year's European Championship matches. And he will be vital to his club in their Cupwinners' Cup games with Manchester United.

Other awards: discovery of the season, goalkeeper Kazimierz Sidorczuk of Lech Poznan; best coach, Drest Lenczyk of Katowice; best referee, Michel Listkiewicz.

SPAIN BY GRAHAM TURNER

PRESIDENT UNDER PRESSURE

SOME of us can remember turning up for an Easter vacation student tournament excited about meeting a side from Real Madrid, only to come to face with a pub team called Real Ale Madrid. Spanish fans have had reason to feel similarly confused.

By Easter, at least, we'll know whether the real Real Madrid emerged from crisis in time to salvage European dreams.

For much of the season it seems as though the pub team lurked within the all-white strip, and 1991 had been on the calendar for only seven days when president Ramon Mendoza was driven to resignation, if not to drink.

When the transformation expected to accompany Alfredo di Stefano's arrival in the dugout failed to materialise, many critics gradually began to divert their accusing gaze away from the playing staff, and to address a beady eye towards Ramon Mendoza's sometimes arrogant and dictatorial brand of presidency.

Initially, Toshack had been blamed for under-training the squad. Fernando Mata, the trainer Tosh had exiled, was brought back and after a couple fo games the verdict was that the squad were being over-trained.

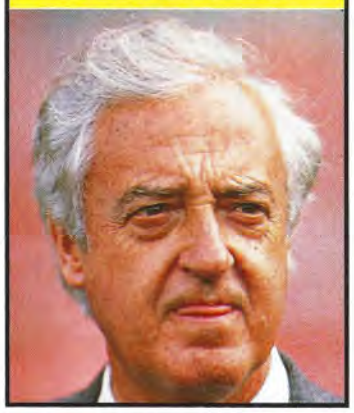
In the meantime, none of the long-term injured – Milla, Gordillo, Llorente – had recovered and Hagi was rapidly consigned by Di Stefano to the bench.

Even though Real beat Barcelona handsomely to take the Super Cup 5-1 on aggregate, the league crisis eventually exploded when Di Stefano's team lost 4-0 at home to Osasuna in the last fixture of 1990.

Real picked up some of the pieces with 2-0 win in Gijon, but on the following evening Mendoza told his directors that he intended to resign, and persuaded them to follow suit.

Having called new elections at an extraordinary general meeting on January 27, Mendoza and the board

Crisis time fo Real's Mendoza



confirmed their intention to stand for re-election, thus inviting the "socios" either to give him the vote of confidence he feels he needs, or to vote him out.

Mendoza was first elected president on May 24, 1985 and re-elected on July 23, 1988 for a second term, due to run to the end of the 1991-92 season.

In five years under Mendoza Real have won five League titles. His resignation after the first lean spell suggests that he is better equipped to handle success than failure, although Mendoza was adamant: "I would have opted for the same course of action even if we had been eight points ahead of Barcelona."

He also blamed Barcelona for mounting a hate campaign and vowed to take a harder line in future "against injustices like the Hugo Sanchez case."

Sanchez, remember, had been banned for two games for retreating to midfield amid a hail of missiles at the end of the Super Cup game in Barcelona, and had "provocatively rubbed his private parts".

While 80,000 fans had the police hiding behind riot shields and making baton charges, "it turns out that Hugo was fined £185 more than FC Barcelona," said Mendoza. "That is intolerable."

"It's easy to be up with Hugo while he's not playing," grinned Jan Urban, the Polish striker who sank Real Ale Madrid with a spectacular hat-trick in Osasuna's epic 4-0 in the Bernabeu, then scored the only goal of the following game against Espanol to join the absent Sanchez at the top of the scoring charts.

That result left the champions eight points behind Barcelona and effectively changed what normally would have been two potential title-clinching fixtures against Atletico and Barcelona into two potential face-savers.

The damage done by Real's first home defeat since Menotti's Atletico Madrid beat them by an identical scoreline in November 1987 extended beyond the two points.

Di Stefano promptly accused his team of playing to the gallery and lack of guts. The players weren't happy. In Gijon, Di Stefano dropped Hugh Sanchez's understudy, Losada, to field an extra midfielder, Aldana, and left Butragueno as the lone ranger up front.

Losada promptly announced that he'll be leaving when his contract expires this summer.

The brighter side of Osasuna's first win in 19 visits to the Bernabeu (they previously managed two draws) was that Urban finally proved he was no cowboy with three superb goals.

He arrived in Pamplona almost by accident in 1989, as the second Pole to hit Spanish soccer since Jan Tomaszewski, the "clown" of a goalkeeper who kept England out of the 1974 World Cup, joined Hercules of Alicante.

Osasuna had asked Michael Robinson to find his own replacement, but the Brits on offer failed to fit the bill. Navarran eyes were diverted towards Igor Belanov, but negotiations dragged on and, only a few days before the start of the season. Urban was grabbed from Gornik Zabrze almost as a panic buy.

Poland's Jan Urban on song for Real Madrid.

Slotted

Apart from topping the half-century of caps, Urban had scored 75 times in 220 games.

"I used to average around 11 goals a season," he recalls. "If I remember rightly, I managed 18 one year."

Urban was officially classed as a miner, though he arrived in Pamplona confessing he had never been down a mine. After starting with Zaglebie, he made his name at Gornik and wore the No. 8 shirt for Poland in the 1986 World Cup.

Just a few games were enough to convince the fans at the El Sadar stadium that the signing had been a shrewd one. Urban, surprisingly fast and skilful for a man of his size, slotted neatly enough into Pedro Maria Zabalza's compact fighting unit.

In the summer Urban – who describes himself as deeply Catholic and not a gambling man – accepted a bet. Team-mate Miguel Merino taunted him with attractive odds that he wouldn't score more than a dozen goals this season. The response has been emphatic.

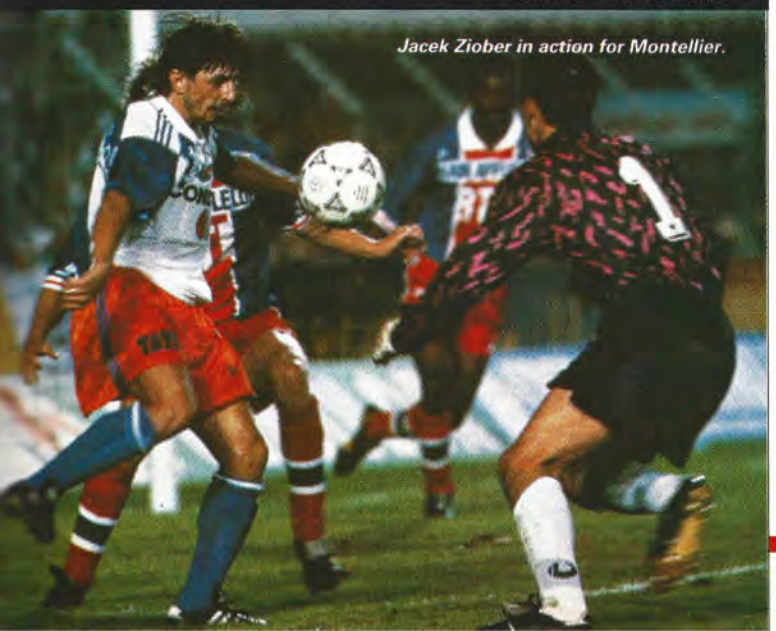
Spanish penalty areas have been converted into Urban districts and the goal against Espanol which earned a rousing tribute from the "red berets" in El Sadar, finally took him to Pole position in the scoring charts alongside Sanchez.

His performances have raised two intriguing questions. Can Urban keep up the good work? And how long will Real keep up the bad work?

Salvaging pride from a wretched season now depends largely on the Champions' Cup campaign.

Even Spartak Moscow must be wondering whether they will play the Real McCoy or the Real Ale McCoy ...

BY BOB VAUGHAN



Jacek Ziober in action for Montellier.

FRANCE BY ANDRE DUCLOS

Goethals ... the 67-year-old who has supplanted Beckenbauer.

Blanc ... in action for Montpellier against Steaua Bucharest.

FROM BAD TO WORSE TO DREADFUL

DREADFUL days these have been in French football, tempting one to turn one's back on all the frightful things which have been happening and talk about something positive; like the voting of versatile, elegant Laurent Blanc as French player of the year.

But of course these grim realities must be faced. The bitter battle of the players with our authorities over freedom of contract; the Real Thing.

The threatened collapse of Bordeaux, after the arrogant, wretched, disastrous regime of Claude Bez left the club £25 million – can you believe it? in the red.

The kicking upstairs of Franz Beckenbauer, with his virtual supplanting by a 67-year-old veteran, the Belgian Raymond Goethals.

The £1.6 million contract given to Beckenbauer, who thought it a "challenge" he says – of course money had nothing to do with it – always seemed quite daft to many of us.

As Maurice Chevalier used to warble, fifty million Frenchmen can't be wrong. Beckenbauer could not even speak French and had to address his troops either through an interpreter, or in English.

It upset the young, highly sucessful manager, Gerard Gili, who surely deserved better. It brought to Marseille a man who, let it be stressed, had never even been a club manager in the whole of his career. Even if Gili, as Beckenbauer has stressed, did originally tell him he would be ready to work with him.

Engaged

Irony after irony. As Goethals has somewhat drily pointed out, all (all?) that has happened is that Beckenbauer now is occupying the position for which he was so expensively engaged in the first place, though I much doubt whether Franz can see it like that.

But Goethals last season was of course the successful manager of Bordeaux; dismissed when the present season was young by the impulsive, dictatorial Claude Bez. Whereupon Gili, despite the assurances he gave to Beckenbauer, took over at Bordeaux.

Goethals has made all kinds of optimistic noises about Marseille. If, as he hopes, Philippe Vercruysse, Dragan Stojkovic and Eric Cantona are all fit by the time the March ties against Milan in the Champions' Cup come round, then indeed Marseille have a chance.

But the extraordinary charges against that fine goalkeeper Pascal Ometa, signed from Racing Club de Paris, over alleged involvement with a band of robbers, have scarcely helped morale, any more than the charges against several of the players of tax evasion ... while with besieged Toulon.

The impression you may get is that French football is rotten right through, but football, as we know, merely tends to reflect the society in which it has its being. The overall implications, then, are hardly pleasing.

As for freedom of contract, French footballers have had it now for over 20 years. To take it away now was always going to provoke great stress and dissension.

Some of you may recall that Freedom of Contract got off on very much the wrong foot, over the Bosquier-Carnus case. Bosquier was the international centre-half, Carnus the international goalkeeper of high-riding Saint Etienne.

Suddenly it was known, in the season before freedom of contract came in, that both had agreed to play the following season for the rival Monaco club, then well behind in second place in the Championship.

An infuriated Roger Rocher, president of Saint Etienne, later to be charged, disgraced and imprisoned in the "slush fund" payments-to-players scandal, banished both players to outer darkness. Saint Etienne fell apart, Monaco won the League.

Season

But it was in fact an extremely bold move by the French Federation to allow total, genuine freedom fo contract, which still does not seem even to exist, elsewhere. It meant that at the end of any given season, a player whose contract was at an end could move to another club without let or hindrance.

In legal, even in moral, terms, this seemed a thoroughly right and valid move. After all, in what other occupation does an employee not have the right (outside sports of course) to leave the firm or organisation he belongs to only on the payment of a fee?

But there are two sides to all such questions, and the French clubs feel the system is being abused, that players can hold them to ransom, that players and agents are encouraged to look for moves.

Such a case has its validity. It should however be mentioned that for the enormous preponderance of football history the boot, if you will, has been on the other foot, that what in England was fancifully called "soccer slavery" existed, whereby players could not escape their clubs at all, if the clubs themselves so chose.

Now to Laurent Blanc, who will of course be facing Manchester United in the quarter-finals of the Cupwinners' Cup.

Once he was a centre-forward or a midfielder; now he plays impressively as sweeper, always ready to go forward in attack, even on occasion to score some important goals.

Sweeper

Louis Nicollin, president of Montpellier, has followed Blanc since he went to the club as a schoolboy, and says he still feels that a little bit more aggression would make him an even better player.

Henry Kasperczak, the former Polish international, who switched Blanc to libero when he became manager of Montpellier, said he knew even before he got there that Laurent would be sweeper.

"The most difficult thing was to convince him," says Kasperczak. "With him, it is all a question of state of mind. He is only 24 and has a formidable trajectory before him. He is such an intelligent and lucid boy."

SWITZERLAND BY ARTHUR ROTMIL

Still on the slide

THE Swiss national side were given a lesson they will remember for a long time when they were crushed 4-0 by world champions Germany in the match organised to celebrate the unification of the two German football federations.

The defeat was a painful reminder of how far the Swiss have slipped behind the top soccer nations.

Among the many unflattering headlines was the quote by Switzerland's German national team manager Uli Stielike: "We are only footballers, they are athletes".

To their credit the Swiss did not seek a good result by playing defensively – they fielded four strikers, in an away match.

But there were decisive differences between the two teams. The Germans were quicker off the mark, attacked on a broad front with several men at once, were superior in ball control at speed, and were better at winning the ball as well as using it.

Still, the Swiss hope to heed the lecture of Stuttgart, and that can only be to their advantage.

The Swiss National-Liga A (First Division) completed the first phase of fixtures, 22 games, and the top eight teams advance to the play-off round, starting on March 3.

While the "upper class" can look forward to increased attendances, the four teams left over – St. Gallen, Aarau, FC Zurich and Wettingen – will be playing against relegation with four clubs fighting for promotion.

Gates were down to an average of 6,695. Goals also dropped, from 2.74 to 2.55 per game.

SOVIET UNION BY BOB VAUGHAN

UEFA Cup action ... Torpedo needed Gytchelov's goal against Monaco.

A 'FAN' GETS THE WINNER

EUROPEAN soccer history has contained many strange stories, but few rank with the Alexander Gytchelov saga and Moscow Torpedo's visit to Monaco.

Gytchelov had problems with his visa, and had to be left out of the official party who flew to Nice on the way to the second leg of their UEFA Cup game.

Eventually the problems were sorted out, and Gytchelov managed to join a later flight, carrying a group of supporters.

On arrival he was met by a courtesy car provided by Torpedo's opponents, A.S. Monaco, and he arrived at the stadium an hour before the start.

Manager Valentin Ivanov kept Gytchelov on the bench for the first half, but he went on at half-time made one goal, and scored the winner in the last minute!

Conceded

Torpedo now face the Danes from Brondby, who have conceded only one goal in six UEFA matches so far.

This is a slightly less daunting prospect than that facing the USSR's other European representatives. Spartak have to face Real Madrid, and Dynamo Kiev meet Barcelona.

Coach Valeri Nepomniachi, who was in charge of the remarkable Cameroon squad at Italia '90 despite being unable to converse with his players, has resigned.

Cash, or the lack of it, is thought to be the reason. He wants to take a job in his homeland, but so far there is no news of any appointment.

BELGIUM BY JONATHAN SHALLARD

Anderlecht's flying 'start'

ANDERLECHT launched their title challenge immediately the winter break was over with a 3-0 defeat of Antwerp – a result which stepped up the pressure on Ghent.

The league leaders clung on one point ahead of the Brussels giants thanks only to a narrow home victory over UEFA Cup contenders FC Liege. Ghent's match-winner was veteran spearhead Erwin Vandenbergh.

The two clubs thus edged further clear of the pack as champions Club Brugge, in third place, dropped a point in a 1-1 home draw against Mechelen.

Anderlecht showed no ill-effects from the one-month lay-off. Marc De Grijse opened the scoring in the 25th minute with the African prodigy, Nii Lamptey, collecting his second goal in as many games 11 minutes later. With seven minutes to play Brazilian Luis Oliveira dribbled around Antwerp keeper Wim De Coninck for a spectacular third.

Condition

Anderlecht coach Aad de Mos said: "Our physical condition is tip-top. I was proud of the way the team performed today."

Brugge's goal against Mechelen was scored by the newly-acclaimed Belgian Footballer of the Year, Franky Van der Elst. Francis Severeyns hit back for Mechelen after the break. Van der Elst's runner-up in the award poll was Anderlecht's Luc Nilis – surprisingly omitted from last summer's World Cup squad – with another Anderlecht star, Oliveira, third.

Oliveira ... scored a spectacular goal for Anderlecht.

The national team's midfield star, Enzo Scifo, was ineligible for the poll because he plays abroad for Auxerre in France. Scifo finished runner-up instead to cyclist Rudy Dhaenens in the Belgian Sportsman of the Year poll.

At the wrong end of the table Kortrijk were pushed further into trouble as they went down to St Truiden, who owed victory to a goal from Nigeria's Christopher Nwosu.

TURKEY BY HASAN CEMALI

Kosecki ... clashing with England defender Pearce.

Million-dollar Kosecki

OTHER nations are strongly represented in Turkish football, although the number of Yugoslavs has decreased sharply.
There were 25 last season in the First Division, but only seven now.

Apart from Kosecki, Polish imports have included Paselski of Adanaspor, Novak and Araskiewitz (Bakirkyspor), Palasz and Vaiskovici (Bursaspor), and Jakolcwich (Fenerbahce).

Adanaspor started a vogue for Algerians by signing three – Amani, Sherif and Khelifa – and Gaziantespor recruited three Brazilians, Balalo, Marcello and Osmair, who became great crowd favourites.

There are three German goalkeepers – veteran Schumacher of Fenerbahce, Muller of Sarlyer and Kraft of Bakirkyspor.

The only two British players in Turkey are Micky Walsh and Ian Wilson, with Besiktas. Potariu of Galatasaray and Nitu of Bursaspor are Romanian, and Wisneski, sold by Fenerbahce to Sarlyer, is the sole player from the USSR.

Concerns

The biggest disappointment concerns two Argentinians recruited by Genclerbirligi of Ankara, Zacarias and Norenberg. Both have shown that they are unable to play at the top level.

Galatasaray organised a six-a-side indoor tournament to fill part of the winter break, and scored 17 goals in three games on the way to the final.

Then they lost 6-2 to Ajax of Holland, one of four "guest" teams along with Ujpest (Hungary), Craiova (Romania) and Dukla (Czechoslavakia).

POLISH International Roman Kosecki broke a record when he at last signed for Galatasaray. The fee was £1.5 million American dollars (about £800,000), a new high for Turkish football.

Kosecki, who has signed a three-year contract, had been on the Galatasaray wanted list for some months. Fenerbahce wanted him, and English clubs Arsenal and Aston Villa also had been linked with him.

Galatasaray celebrated Kosecki's arrival from Legia Warsaw by starting the second half of the League programme with a 2-1 away win over the newcomers, Aydinspor, to maintain their five-point lead over the only unbeaten club, Besiktas.

Trabzonspor, who had been joint second with Besiktas at halfway, lost to them 3-2 in Istanbul, despite two goals from Hamdi.

This was a fine performance by Gordon Milne's "Gala" team – they were without Fayyaz, injured, and Metin, suspended after being sent off.

Fenerbahce, who had won only once in ten home games, brought off a 5-2 success at Gaziantepspor – their fifth away success. Aykut scored a hat-trick.

The first half of the season brought 345 goals, an average of 2.87 per game, plus 441 yellow cards and 24 reds.

The top gate was for the Karsiyaka-Fenerbahce match in Izmir, when 44,037 attended.

A late goal by substitute Prekazi enabled Galatasaray to beat Konyaspor 1-0 away, and reach the quarter-finals of the Turkish Cup.

Besiktas also won 1-0, at Samsunspor.

Exclusive interview by BRIAN HOMEWOOD

ZICO WANTS THE BOSS SACKED

ZICO, Secretary of Sport, has unveiled a plan that he hopes can pull Brazilian football out of its crisis.

His intention is to get rid of the current crop of directors, because he holds them responsible for the game's catastrophic situation.

An exclusive interview with World Soccer shows that one of the people Zico most wants to get rid of is Ricardo Teixeira, president of the CBF and son-in-law of the FIFA president, Joao Havelange. Zico says: "My relationship with Teixeira? It does not exist."

Zico, speaking about Brazilian sport in general, claimed: "There are presidents of confederations who were never anything, but today they are in charge. And they are benefitting from sport more than helping sport."

Although Zico did not say so, Teixeira is one of these people. Before becoming CBF president two years ago, he had never played competitive football and had never been involved as a director at club level.

He was a successful businessman, one of the biggest milk producers in Rio de Janeiro. Now he is the most powerful man in Brazilian football, yet he has done nothing significant to stem the tide of falling attendances, on-the-field violence, and the mass exodus of players.

As Zico points out, Teixeira has seemed more interested in getting himself re-elected next year.

Former international midfielder Zico also criticised Teixeira for interfering with team selections made by Brazil manager Paulo Roberto Falcao.

Teixeira banned him from calling up foreign-based players for his first four games in charge, and still refuses to let him pick Alemao after a slanging match involving president and player.

Zico also blames Teixeira for the row over advertising before and during the World Cup in Italy.

Although Zico is directly responsible to the Brazilian president, he cannot simply wave a magic wand, say "abracadabra" and change the way Brazilian football is run.

The structure is imposed by law, and to change it Zico would have to send his plan for approval by Congress. He fully intends to do so.

Entitled

The main point of the plan is to change the voting system for the CBF president and the presidents of the 27 regional (state) federations.

Under the current system, only the heads of those 27 federations are entitled to vote for the CBF president. As pointed out numerous times in this magazine, this rule means that Teixeira has only to keep these 27 happy and he will be re-elected.

Zico intends to change this by allowing the clubs to vote as well, making Teixeira answerable to a lot more people.

At federation level, Zico intends to give greater voting power to the big clubs. This, he hopes, will put an end to absurd situations such as that in Sao Paulo, where state federation president Eduardo Jose Farah has squeezed 28 clubs into the Paulista championship simply to ensure that small outfits vote for him at the next presidential election.

Teixeira ... at the centre of the crisis.

Amateur club directors are on Zico's list, too. The project envisages forcing all professional clubs to be run on the basis of a normal company.

At present, the money at most big Brazilian clubs is owned by thousands of members (socios) and the destiny of these funds is determined by amateur directors, who often are more interested in getting a name for themselves than working for the good of the club or the game.

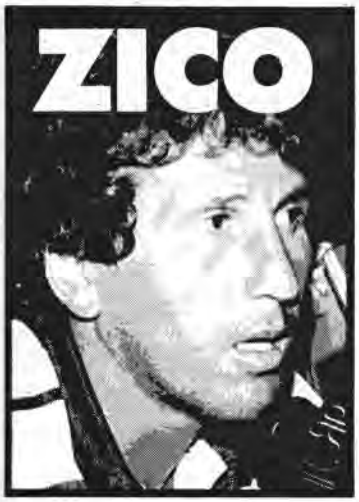
There are successful exceptions, such as Botafogo, winners of the Rio championship for the past two years, and the current Paulista champions, Bragantino.

Botafogo have kept going only because of cash injections by their millionaire president, Emile Pinheiro. Similarly, Bragantino grew from an insignificant provincial side thanks to financial aid from the Chedid family

But these two clubs are exceptions. Usually Brazilian directors have no more money invested in the club than the most humble member, and using the money wisely seems to be the least of their considerations.

Zico's views about the situation are reproduced alongside.

'OUR RELATIONSHIP DOES NOT EXIST'



WORLD SOCCER: Is it fair to say that someone who came from abroad and saw a football match in Brazil would be disappointed, especially with the level of violence on the pitch, the poor refereeing and the lack of supporters in the stadium?

ZICO: Violence exists in all the stadiums of the world. In Europe you also have violence on the field but there it is punished more severely. Here in Brazil we don't have the severe punishments that ought to exist for the athletes and the referees. Anyone who uses violence ought to be punished but this does not happen here.

Without a disciplinary system, you lose credibility and this affects the presence of the supporters, who see that nothing happens so do not bother to go to watch the games.

Also, they lose interest because here we do not have an organised calendar or serious competitions. If you organise a serious championship, the fans will go and watch. All we have to do is organise things properly.

At the moment you have championship on top of championship, with clubs playing two or three competitions at the same time, and this creates terrible confusion.

For example, we have two national championships – the Brazilian championship and the Brazil Cup. On top of this we have the Libertadores Cup and last year there were teams playing four games a week.

We should organise the calendar with the interests of the clubs, the players and the referees in mind.

W.S.: How can the project you drew up recently change the situation?

ZICO: First of all, it is not the "Zico project." It's a proposal the sports secretariat is making to try to change Brazilian sport and to modify structures which, if the results of Brazilian sport had been good, would not need changing.

But the results have not been good, and we are attempting to change the basic structures, so that people who really want to help sport can do so, while also getting rid of those people who take advantage of sport and who do nothing for sport but who at the moment are in charge of sport.

People who never did anything for sport are today directing sport. There are presidents of federations and confederations who were never anything. They weren't athletes or presidents of clubs, yet today they are in charge. Andy they are benefitting from sport rather than helping it.

W.S.: How will the project get rid of these people?

ZICO: The idea is to increase the electoral colleges at the time of the presidential elections, and give the clubs a chance to vote for someone who wants to improve things for them and who defends the interests of the clubs who practise the sport, not the federations.

At the moment it is the presidents of the federations who vote for the president of the confederation. This is wrong. Why is it that just the federations vote – one person voting in the name of 20?

The presidents could continue to vote, but the clubs should have a chance as well. This is the project.

W.S.: At the moment it seems the presidents of the confederations are more interested in pleasing the federations than working for the good of the sport.

ZICO: That is what happens. At times there are suspicions of corruption, that these votes are more bought than obtained by defending interests of the sport. Whoever has more money gets elected. It is not just in football but in other sports as well.

If a president is good, he will not be afraid of an election. If he is afraid of an election, there is probably a reason.

W.S.: The project also aims to give the players more freedom?

ZICO: Any worker has the right to leave his job and get a better one. But in football, he does not have this right. The professional footballer in Brazil is a prisoner of his club, and when his contract ends he can't simply walk out. He has to wait for another club to buy him.

Often, the club ask for a very high fee so it is very difficult for him to be sold. This happens principally at the start of a player's career. I consider this a type of slavery that does not exist anywhere else in the world. It is completely different to the transfer system in Europe.

W.S.: What are the other main points of the plan?

ZICO: We also intend to transform the clubs into companies. Clubs which have a professional side should be administered by professionals to get rid of the type of director who carries out transactions and plays around with money which is not his but belongs to the club.

W.S.: Do you think this project will be approved easily?

ZICO: Easily, no. There are a lot of people interested in keeping things as they are. But if things stay as they are, we might as well close down Brazilian sport altogether.

We are still waiting for suggestions to finish the work before handing it to the president, who will pass it to Congress. We hope that it will be in the president's hand in very soon, ready for him to pass on.

W.S.: Were you surprised at some of the criticisms the plan received? For example, the CBF president Ricardo Teixeira, said it could cause FIFA to suspend Brazil.

ZICO: Maybe he asked FIFA to do this. If Joao Havelange were not his father-in-law, he would not say anything.

W.S.: What do you think of Falcao's work with the Brazilian national team?

ZICO: It's still at an experimental stage but it's a dangerous situation because Brazil depends a lot upon results. If it was any other manager other than Falcao he would have fallen a long time ago, because you can't have a Brazilian national team that plays four games without scoring no matter how many experiments are done.

W.S.: Is it right to bar foreign-based players from the Brazil team?

ZICO: No. But Falcao can't have the base of the national team formed by players who are now abroad. He could call up some of them but the base should be with players who play in Brazil, even for a World Cup. You have to value the ones who are in your country. Also, we saw that, in terms of results, Brazil had one of the worst performances in its history with a team based on players who are in Europe.

W.S.: There seems little doubt that the ban on foreign-based players was imposed by the CBF, not by Falcao. What do you think of this type of interference?

ZICO: I am against this. Falcao has to have autonomy to decide things himself. If I were manager, it would be me making the selections. I would not give way on this.

The national team has to be above any private interest and so any athlete should be available for the national team, independent of whether or not he has a personal problem with the CBF president.

W.S.: The CBF criticised some of the players during the World Cup, saying they were more interested in financial considerations.

ZICO: Could it be that the players spoke the truth and the truth discomfited the directors?

The players were interested in their pockets because their images were being used. Being a footballer is one thing, being an advertising vehicle is another. They made the players into an advertising vehicle for a company, and this has a price. The players thought this price was not what it should have been. They weren't demanding absurd amounts of money.

If I work as an advertising symbol, I have my price. You can't oblige players who go in to the national team to use a hat with a slogan on it. This was the big problem. It wasn't a problem of playing and arguing about prize money.

W.S.: There is a never-ending controversy about whether Brazil should play attractive football or play to win.

ZICO: Brazil should play its own type of football. If you lose playing your own type of football it's not so bad, but if you adopt a different style and end up with a terrible result, nobody will accept it.

You can't change an entire style from one moment to the next. On the other hand, you have to keep up with the times. Italia'90 was a World Cup without art. Brazil has to have good physical preparation, competitiveness, this is necessary, but you can never leave aside talent.

W.S.: What sort of relationship do you have with Ricardo Teixeira?

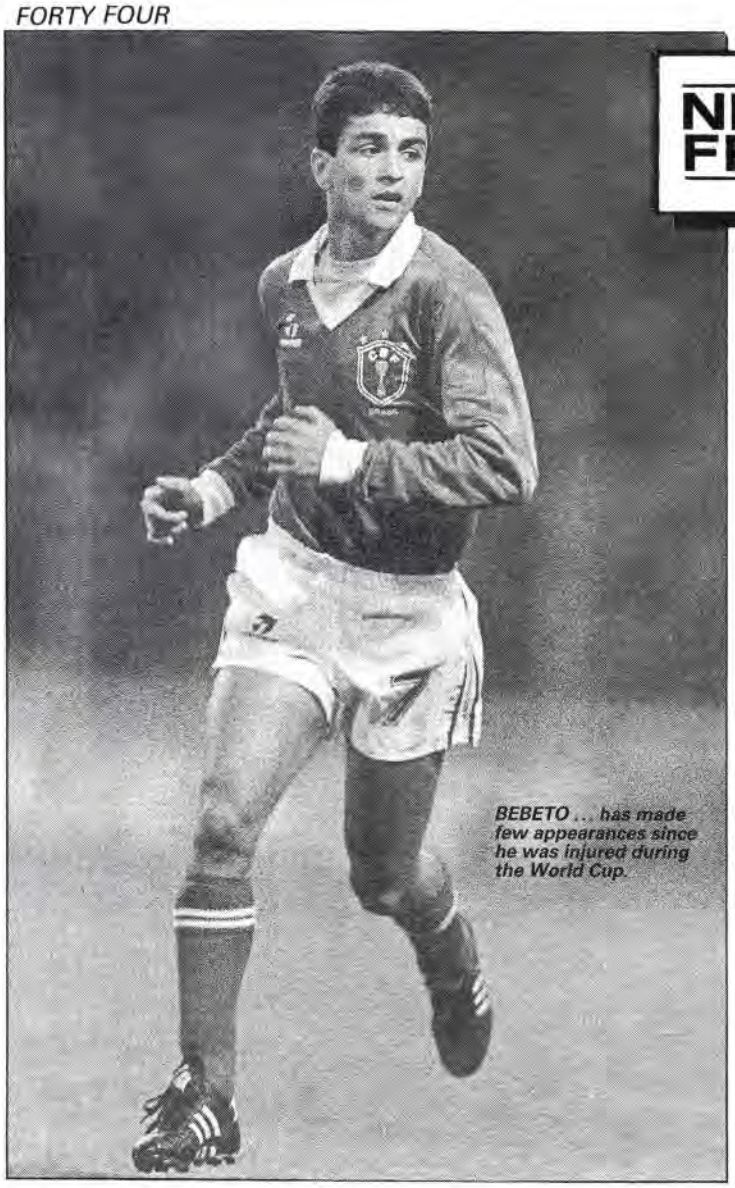
ZICO: It does not exist.

Alemao (left) has been kept out of the Brazilian team after being involved in a slanging match with Teixeira.

BRAZIL SPORTS SECRETARY PLANS A NEW DEAL

NEWS FROM SOUTH AMERICA

BY ERIC WEIL



BEBETO ... has made few appearances since he was injured during the World Cup.

RIO'S ONLY HONOUR

FLAMENGO won the Brazilian Cup – a competition which many clubs did not take seriously in its earlier stages although it qualified the winner for the 1991 Libertadores Cup.

Flamengo managed to hold on for a 0-0 draw in the second leg at Goias under heavy rain, which does not suit their style, and took the trophy by virtue of a 1-0 win in the home leg.

Flamengo thus return to the Libertadores Cup in which they also played last year and which they won in 1981. Brazil's other representative was to be the winner of the national championship which had reached the quarter-final stage at press time – a knock-out in which the pairings were: Palmeiras v Gremio, Corinthians v Atletico Mineiro, Santos v Sao Paulo, Bragantino v Bahia.

The national championship was played in two rounds with teams divided into two sections of 10. In one round teams in each group played each other and in the other teams from one group played all those from the other.

The two section winners in each round – Gremio and Atletico Mineiro in the first round and Santos and Palmeiras in the second – qualified for the quarter-finals and they were joined by the four other teams obtaining most points in both rounds These were Corinthians, Sao Paulo, Bahia and Bragantino. Somewhat complicated, but interesting!

It is unusual that no teams from the supposedly strong Rio league made the last eight last year. The Sao Paulo league is strongly represented by five teams – Santos, Bragantino, Corinthians, Palmeiras and Sao Paulo.

Defending champions Vasco da Gama failed in both rounds and finished below the half-way line in the overall standings, which were topped by Porto Alegre's Gremio.

Vasco badly missed Bebeto who has only played sporadically since he was injured during the World Cup last year.

Internacional (Limeira) and Vitoria were relegated to the second division – the latter because they had five points deducted for fielding an ineligible player.

PARAGUAY:

National championship

FIRST Division champions Cerro Porteno of Asuncion were eliminated in the first round of the national championship and at press time six teams had qualified for the quarter-finals – Libertadores Cup winners Olimpia, Sportivo Luqueno, Colegiales and River Plate from the first division and provincials Aquilaban and Cerro Porteno of Ciudad del Este.

BOLIVIA:

First title

ORIENTE PETROLERO beat Bolivar in a two-legged final and play-off to win the first of the season's championships and a place in the 1991 Libertadores Cup.

CHILE:

Colo Colo build up lead

COLO COLO, the defending champions, had built up a five-point lead in the Chilean First Division with nine games to go after picking up 16 points in their last nine games – a pace no other team could match.

Another popular Santiago team, Universidad de Chile, who returned to the first division this season, continue to struggle near the bottom.

They dismissed their coach, Manuel Pellegrini, and replaced him with Pedro Morales, but the latter has been ill since then and virtually directs the team from his hospital bed – a no go situation.

COLOMBIA:

America all the way

AMERICA (CALI) easily topped the overall standings of the regular championship from which the top eight went into a final round.

America also took most bonus points (two), gained from leading positions in previous stages, into the finals which helped them to easily win their four-team group. Millionarios of Bogota, who won the last championship in 1988, did not qualify.

The 1989 event was declared void following the murder of a referee. Millonarios were ninth overall to just miss out.

Playing a final round-robin for the title at press time were Bucaramanga, Nacional (Medellin) and Independiente Santa Fe (Bogota) apart from America.

PERU:

Alianza Lima back

ALIANZA LIMA, the team virtually wiped out in an air crash two years ago, top the Metropolitan Division of the regional championship after 14 of 22 games. while Sport Boys, the only unbeaten team (with a 4-10-0 record) are two points back.

Sport Boys are already assured of a place in the 1991 Libertadores Cup as winner of the decentralized championship. The other candidate will come out of a final round between the two top teams of the Metropolitan Division and winners of other regional championships.

Deportivo Municipal, almost relegated last year, are in joint fourth place and have Argentine goalkeeper Ivan Sopegno, little known in his own country, to thank.

He is in his first season in Peru and considered the best goalkeeper in the championship. Leading scorer is Sport Boys' Brazilian Claudio Adao with nine goals. He was also top scorer in the decentralized tournament with 12 goals.

Trobbiani ... suspended.

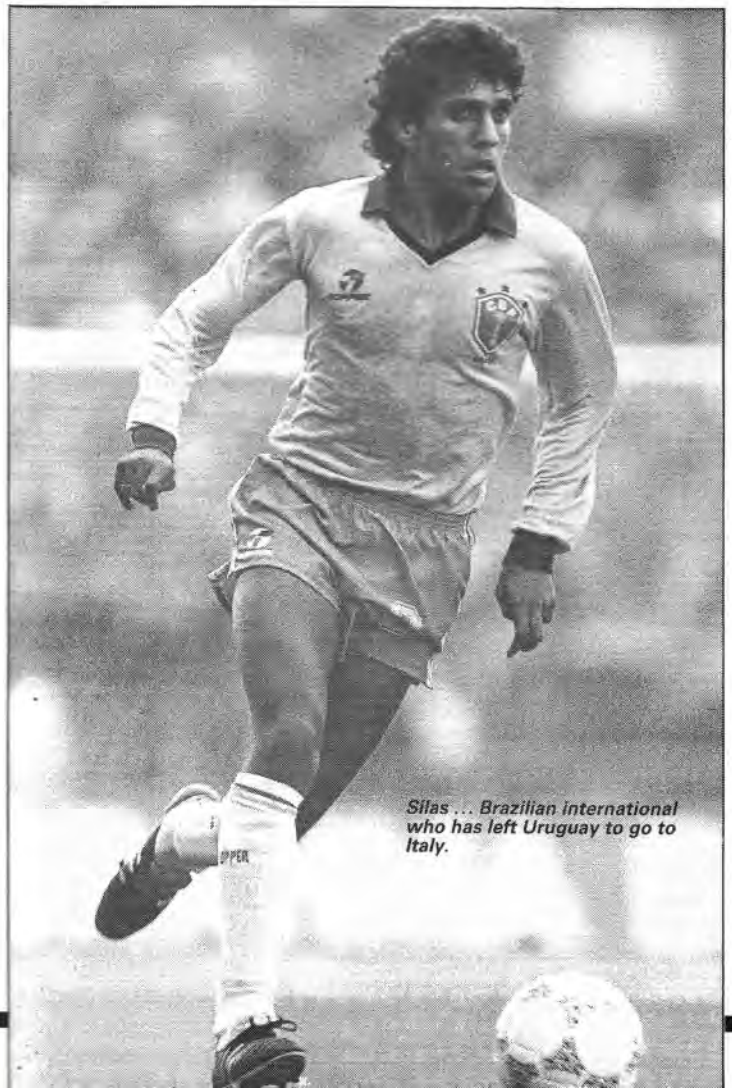
EQUADOR:

Final round

TWO teams from Quito (Nacional and Liga Deportiva Universitaria) and two from Guayaquil (Barcelona and Emelec) started play in the final round. Both opening matches finished in draws, but Barcelona were heavily hit by the sending off of their veteran play-maker, former Argentine international Marcelo Trobbiani who was suspended for the next two matches.

Menotti ... his team won four successive games to climb away from the bottom place.

PENAROL FINALLY UNDERSTANDS MENOTTI



Silas ... Brazilian international who has left Uruguay to go to Italy.

FORMER Argentine World Cup coach Cesar Menotti, who made a poor start with Penarol and was in danger of being dismissed, finally seems to have got his players to understand his tactics. They won four games in a row to move away from the bottom of the first division.

Menotti's team does not mark man for man in defence and attacks with three proper forwards backed by three halves – a system which South American players adapt to more readily although too many of them have lately been copying the more classical 4-4-2 from Europe.

Support

Bella Vista, a small club, took over the first division lead, a point ahead of Nacional at press time. A Panamanian player, Delly Valdez, who has been playing in Uruguay for two years, stars for Nacional.

Central Espanol, another modest club which was leading at the halfway stage, lost Brazilian international forward Paulo Silas, who had been playing for them on loan while an agent tried to arrange a move to a European club. Silas, 25, has now been transferred to Italy's Cesena at a reported fee of 1.4 million dollars.

A brief strike threatened to hold up the first division championship. The players union called a strike in support of two players of second division leaders Tanque who had been suspended following positive dope tests. The players had taken medicines against a cold which the club doctor gave them.

The suspension and the strike – which also threatened the participation of Nacional and Penarol in the South American Super Cup – was soon lifted.

Cristaldo ... suspended.

LUIS IS A LOSER

LUIS CRISTALDO, an Argentine player on the books of Bolivia's Oriente Petrolero, has been suspended for an indefinite period for falsifying documents to give him Bolivian nationality.

This enabled his club not to count him in the maximum number of foreign players permitted.

Cristaldo also played for Bolivia in qualifying games for last year's World Cup. The suspension was imposed by the Bolivian sports secretariat, as the league declared itself "incompetent" to take action.

SOUTH AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP

Kick-off times for the South American championship (Copa America) in Chile in July are as follows:

GROUP A
Saturday, July 6
At Santiago, Chile Venezuela at Chile, 3 p.m.
Paraguay vs. Peru, 5 p.m.
Monday, July 8
At Concepcion, Chile
Argentina vs. Venezuela, 6:30 p.m.
Peru at Chile, 8:30 p.m.
Wednesday, July 10
At Santiago, Chile
Paraguay vs. Venezuela, 6 p.m.
Argentina at Chile, 8 p.m.
Friday, July 12
At Concepcion, Chile
Peru vs. Venezuela, 3 p.m.
Argentina vs. Paraguay, 5 p.m.
Sunday, July 14
At Santiago, Chile
Argentina vs. Peru, 3 p.m.
Paraguay at Chile, 5 p.m.

GROUP B
Sunday, July 7
At Vina del Mar, Chile
Colombia vs. Ecuador, 3 p.m.
Uruguay vs. Bolivia, 5 p.m.
Tuesday, July 9
At Vina del Mar, Chile
Uruguay vs. Ecuador, 6:30 p.m.
Brazil vs. Bolivia, 8:30 p.m.
Thursday, July 11
At Vina del Mar, Chile
Colombia vs. Bolivia, 6:30 p.m.
Brazil vs. Uruguay, 8:30 p.m.
Saturday, July 13
At Vina del Mar, Chile
Ecuador vs. Bolivia, 2 p.m.
Brazil vs. Colombia, 4 p.m.
Monday, July 15
At Vina del Mar, Chile
Uruguay vs. Colombia, 6:30 p.m.
Brazil vs. Ecuador, 8:30 p.m.

SECOND ROUND
Wednesday, July 17
At Santiago, Chile
Group A winner vs. Group B second place, 6 p.m.
Group B winner vs. Group A second place, 8 p.m.
Friday, July 19
At Santiago, Chile
Group A winner vs. Group A second place, 6 p.m.
Group B winner vs. Group B second place, 8 p.m.
Sunday, July 21
At Santiago, Chile
Group A second place vs. Group B second place, 3 p.m.
Group A winner vs. Group B winner, 5 p.m.

GANSLER REIGN IS ALMOST OVER

BOB GANSLER'S days as coach of the United States National team are evidently drawing to a close. The United States Soccer Federation has admitted that it is looking for a replacement.

Hank Steinbrecher, the USSF's new General Secretary, has recently had discussions with three top foreign coaches – Sven Goran Eriksson, the Swede in charge at Benfica, Johan Cruyff and Bora Milutinovic.

In a recent interview, Steinbrecher agreed that the USSF was "very aggressively looking at this issue", but was relentlessly insistent that Gansler would stay on in some capacity. He stressed that there would be "no rush to judgement" and no move would be made until the USSF was satisfied that it had identified its needs. "In the past," he said, "we've brought in foreigners who didn't know the dynamics here, and it hasn't worked."

True enough. Dettmar Cramer was coach for a short while in the 1970s, but left when the USSF found it couldn't afford to pay the salary it had agreed upon. Alkis Panagoulias was appointed head coach in 1983 but failed to get the USA out of the first round in the 1984 Olympics, or to qualify for the 1986 World Cup.

More significantly, Karl-Heinz Heddergott arrived in 1982 to be the USSF's Director of Coaching. He stepped off the plane straight into a buzz-saw of opposition from the American coaching community, which was not willing to accept a

THE AMERICAN SCENE BY PAUL GARDNER

foreigner. Heddergott's work was constantly undermined by an atmosphere of, at best, non-cooperation, at worst outright hostility.

In July 1985, then USSF President Warner Fricker called Panagoulias and Heddergott "two of the most talented coaches in the world", and then fired both of them. Of course, he didn't say they were being fired, merely that their contracts were not being renewed.

Direction

This inability to state clearly what it is doing persists in today's USSF. Technical Director Walter Chyzowych has clearly been fired – why else would he give a farewell speech to the staff at the coaching schools? But, no, says Steinbrecher, he hasn't been fired. What then? "Right now, Chyzowych is not the Technical Director. We want a new focus for the coaching schools, we were not happy with the direction we're going in that programme."

And Bob Gansler will not be fired. "Gansler has done a great deal for us, he's a very professional man," says Steinbrecher, "He will have a fundamental role in the development of our coaches and our players."

Is all this vagueness a careful attempt not to upset anyone, or is it just pussyfooting around? Probably, it is the result of fear. Fear that, once again, the appointment of a new

USSF looking at this issue very aggressively

coach, a foreigner, will act as a red rag to the American coaches who will then make his life miserable. By "not firing" Chyzowych, by keeping Gansler on, the USSF hopes to soften the blow, and to make life easier for the new coach.

Who will that be? The betting is now heavily on Bora Milutinovic, the man who took Mexico to the World Cup quarter finals in 1986, and astonished the world (well, Scotland and Sweden, at least) by getting Costa Rica into the second round in 1990.

Good news

Milutinovic speaks Spanish, which should be good news for the Hispanic players in the USA, who have never figured highly in Gansler's estimation. But Milutinovic is not fluent in English – something that might make him difficult to "sell to corporate America." Such are the criteria that now apply to the appointment of soccer coaches!

The United States does not have a professional outdoor league – and it will not get one for at least another year. The American Professional Soccer League, despite its title, is a semi-pro operation, one that is experiencing serious difficulties.

Desperate

The APSL played the 1990 season with 22 clubs, 11 each in the Eastern and Western conferences. There will NOT be 22 clubs in 1991, as I outline in the article below.

One major problem is still bedevilling the 1994 World Cup organisers, who desperately want to play games in the New York area: the lack of a suitable stadium.

Matters are no better in the West, where the Portland Timbers, the New Mexico Chiles and the Arizona Condors have all folded. Mergers are likely here, too, probably leading to the disappearance of at least two

Colleges start a surge

Full house ... for basketball. Soccer does not draw anything like the same numbers in the States.

College sport is a big deal in the United States. All the top pro players in gridiron football and basketball, and an increasing number in baseball, were star players in the colleges. That is where they built up their reputation and their following – while also helping to increase the popularity of college sport.

Soccer would very much like to be part of that flourishing scene. But despite being widely tipped in the colleges, it is not a sport that attracts many spectators, or a great deal of notice. The college soccer people are doing what they can to alter that and start a much-needed surge in popularity.

This year they chose a site – Tampa, Florida – in advance of the final round of the Division 1 Championship. And a major coup arrived with the news that CBS would cover the games. Not live coverage, but the one-hour tape delayed highlight package marks the first time college soccer has been on national network television.

The Florida sun beamed down, the organisation was excellent, crowds of over 4,000 enthusiastic fans turned out – in fact everything went splendidly. Except for the soccer. Once again the sport turned sour when the big moment arrived.

Double

The four semi-finalists – Evansville, UCLA, Rutgers and North Carolina State-played a total of six hours of football. And produced just one goal, in the 1-0 semi-final win by Rutgers over Evansville.

The new champions are UCLA – who, in the semi-final, played a 0-0 overtime tie with NC State before winning on penalty kicks, and then went on to a double overtime 0-0 tie in the final, before beating Rutgers on penalties.

Brilliant. In a country where the biggest criticism that football faces is that there are not enough goals, we now have a college champion who got there without winning either the semi-final or the final, and without scoring in either game.

American sports fans – the people who are needed to make World Cup 94 a success – are not going to understand that. Whether the Americans are right to demand more scoring is a matter of opinion. But they are surely 100 per cent correct to see the penalty-kick tie-breaker as a cheap, ludicrous gimmick.

College soccer is also running into other problems. This is a bad time for college sports in general, which have been racked by financial and recruiting scandals – things that are often euphemistically referred to as "over-emphasis." As a result, the National Collegiate Athletic Association has announced a series of cuts in sports programmes. The soccer season, already a mere 22 games, is to be cut to 20.

More damaging is the ruling that college players – formerly barred from outside competition only during the college season – cannot now play for outside teams at any time during the 10-month academic year.

Crisis coach ... Bob Gansler seems to be on his way out as his boss interviews possible successors.

more clubs.

The likelihood for 1991, then, is that the APSL will be reduced to half its 1990 size. Which can be viewed either as a disaster, or as a strengthening measure that has cut away the weaker members who were holding things back. The APSL clearly regards the 1991 season as a sort of holding operation, looking forward to 1991.

Then it is hoped that the USSF will start to put its pro-league plan into operation, and ther APSL will be admitted to the pro-division. At the moment, it is merely a member of the USSF's Senior Amateur Division.

The USSF has recently shown a willingness to step forward to help the pros – even to the extent of giving $15,000 to the St. Louis Storm so that it could take part in an indoor tournament in Switzerland. A possibly dangerous precedent was set with that decision. If a meaningless indoor tournament is worth $15,000 of the USSF's money, how much will it be willing to pay outdoor clubs to ensure the financial strength of the APSL?

BIG CITIES GET GOING

Things are beginning to get serious on the World Cup front.

Cities are now putting money on the table as they bid for World Cup games. The first to do so was Honolulu, in Hawaii, which sent in its $60,000 deposit for the rights to stage three first-round games. (Honolulu? Way out in the middle of the Pacific? Are they kidding?) Other cities to cough up include Chicago, Charlotte, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Philadelphia and Atlanta.

Bids are also in for the right to stage the first major event on the 1994 tournament: the draw for the qualifying rounds, to be held in December, 1991. Honolulu, Charlotte, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Kansas City, New York, Orlando and Phoenix have all applied.

New York may well get the nod to stage the draw – but will they ever be able to stage any games? At the moment, the best they can do is a joint bid with New Haven, in Connecticutt. Games would be played at Yale University's stadium, some 79 miles north of New York.

Artificial

FIFA are very anxious that games be played in New York City and they have let it be known that they do not consider New Haven to be part of the city. So what can be done? Where are the stadiums? Scanning the New York and vicinity horizon, this is what one comes up with:

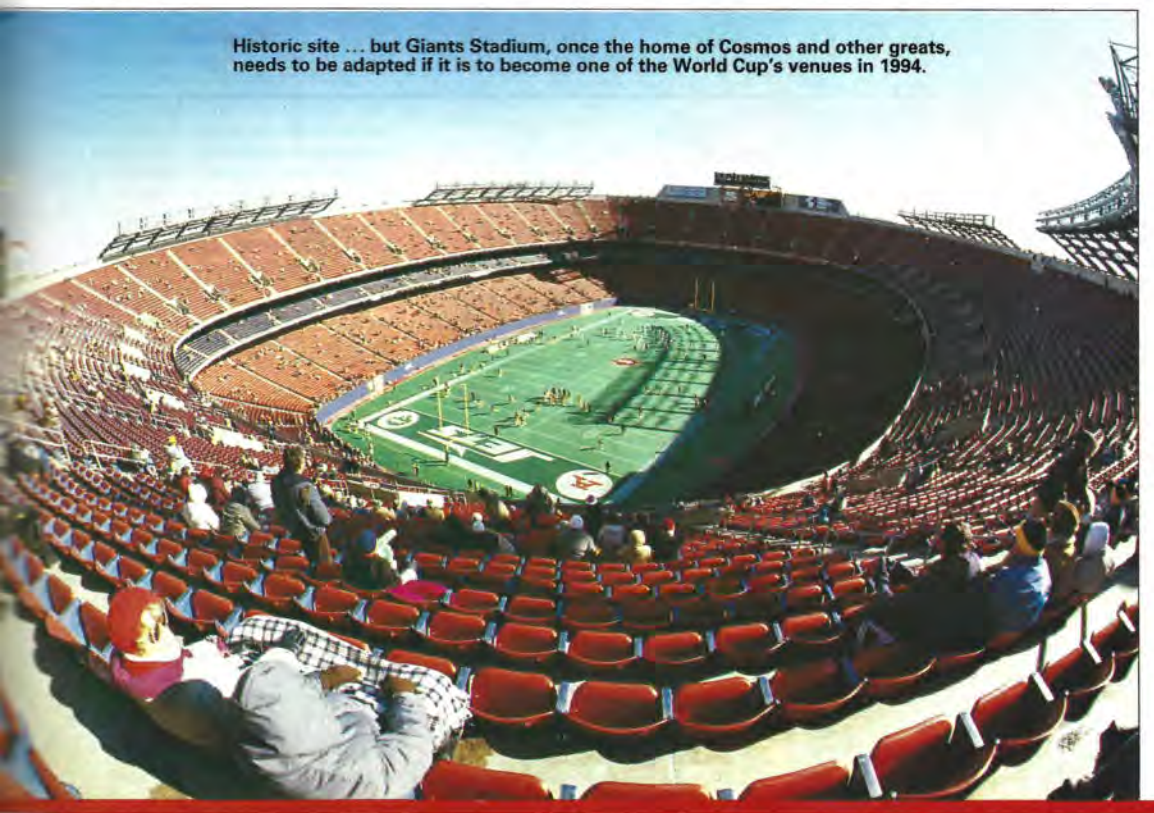
1. Giants Stadium. Where the Cosmos used to play. Actually in New Jersey, but just across the river from New York and considered part of the city by sports fans – the New York Giants gridiron team play there. Problems: artificial turf, which can be changed, and a too-narrow field, which can be changed only with maximum disruption. That probably means knocking down part of the stadium, losing seats, raising the level of the field. As virtually all the seats are sold to season-ticket holders for N.Y. Giants games, any that are removed would have to be replaced, quickly.

2. Shea Stadium and Yankee Stadium. Both in New York City (both, in fact, owned by the City), homes of the N.Y. Mets and the N.Y. Yankees baseball teams. Both have the same problems. Both have the pear-shaped baseball configuration, which makes it difficult (but not impossible) to fit in a soccer field. But the big snag is that the World Cup will be played smack in the middle of the baseball season. If either stadium were to be used, it would have to be taken over completely for football purposes for at least a month, probably longer. And where do either the Yankees or the Mets play during that time?

3. Downing Stadium. Randall's Island. Another City-owned stadium, built back in the depression era, not used for anything much now, and needing a great deal of work. Even if the will to do that existed, the stadium is not well situated for automobile access, and can hold only about 25,000 spectators.

4. Maybe somebody will build a brand new stadium in the city in the next three years. Financier Donald Trump was talking about this a couple of years back. The idea was to build a domed gridiron stadium in Flushing Meadows Park (alongside Shea Stadium) and to attract a new gridiron franchise. If that happened, then it would make sense to build the stadium big enough to accommodate a World Cup size soccer field (as was done for the magnificent Robbie Stadium in Florida).

FIFA's desire to see games played in the Big Apple is widely, almost universally, shared. But the on-the-ground realities are not encouraging. As they probably say in Brooklyn, it ain't gonna be easy.



Historic site ... but Giants Stadium, once the home of Cosmos and other greats, needs to be adapted if it is to become one of the World Cup's venues in 1994.

Five clubs drop out of pro league

BY COLIN JOSE

PROFESSIONAL soccer in the United States will take another step back along the very long road to respectability this summer, when the American Professional Soccer League begin to plan an interlocking schedule between the Eastern and Western Divisions.

But it often seems like one step forward and two backwards as the Americans strive to establish a truly national league in time for the World Cup of 1994.

In the new season the league will be without five of last year's teams, all victims of the indifference of the American public to a game that remains a recreational sport rather than a spectator sport.

The Western Soccer League will lose Portland Timbers, Arizona Condors and New Mexico Chiles, thereby reducing the league from 11 teams to eight, while Real Santa Barbara are considering a move to Sacramento and San Diego Nomads may be moving to Los Angeles.

Over in the east, the American Soccer League will lose both Washington teams. Diplomats have folded and Stars have merged with the Maryland Bays, last year's APSL champions.

Another merger could be that between Fort Lauderdale Strikers and Orlando Lions, while the future of New Jersey Eagles and Boston Bolts is by no means certain. There will be one new team, in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Repeated

Unfortunately it's an all-too-familiar story, repeated over and over in the history of soccer in the United States. Franchises fold or move or merge and new ones spring up full of hope only to fall one or two years later.

Last year's attendance figures tell the tale and at the same time show the enormity of the task needed to sell soccer in time for 1994.

Attendances in the Western Soccer League were slightly higher than in the east. In Salt Lake City, Utah, the Sting had the highest average attendance of any team – 5,441.

They were followed by New Mexico with 4,861, Seattle 3,790, Portland 3,427 and Colorado 3,246. Santa Barbara had 560.

In the American Soccer League, Tampa Bay Rowdies led with 3,579, followed by Fort Lauderdale 2,774.

Now cast your mind back to the North American Soccer League of 1980. In those happy days the average attendances were New York Cosmos 42,804, Tampa Bay 28,345 and Seattle 24,247.

Even the lowest, Philadelphia, drew 4,465. So you can see just how long the road back will be.

Up in Canada it is much the same story. The Canadian Soccer League, now approaching its fifth season, will be without a team in Ottawa for 1991, and possibly minus Edmonton Brickmen. But the new team in Nova Scotia is scheduled to begin play this year.

'FACE THE BEST TO BE THE BEST'

ASIAN Football Confederation secretary Peter Velappan highlighted some of the problems facing soccer on the continent when he spoke at the Asian under-19 championships in Indonesia.

He said that Asian teams would not make any progress in international soccer while they continued to play among themselves, rather than meeting top opponents from Europe or Latin America.

He acknowledged the good work done by many of the regional coaches, but pointed out that they too lack exposure to football in the rest of the world.

Asian players, he said, lacked the very high level of technique, tactical skill and physical fitness required at world level.

Velappan said: "Leading teams in the World Cup started their serious preparations some four years before the tournament. Asian teams, which are way below the standard of their counterparts from Europe or Latin America, began preparing their teams much later."

But as far as the long term was concerned Velappan appeared optimistic, pointing out that half the world's population was in Asia and that soccer was firmly established in every country.

The championship was won by South Korea, who beat North Korea 4-3 on penalties in the final, after a goalless draw. Pak Dong Hak, North Korea's captain, missed a penalty in the second half, then missed again in the shootout.

Syria beat Qatar 1-0 in the match for third place.

The eight finalists that gathered for the 27th regional youth championships produced some good, if at times naive, football, and there was certainly the feeling that we would be hearing more from some of the young stars on view.

The South Korean youngsters who took the trophy were an imitation of their senior colleagues, playing good technical football and winning, in the end, through organisation rather than raw talent.

However it was Syria who really won the hearts of the fans.

Looking

Coached by a Brazilian, they played with an exciting Latin style, building up attacks with short, quick passes, and keeping possession while looking for a gap to develop. They certainly ran Bahrain off their feet in the first game, with Fawar Mando – perhaps the outstanding player of the tournament – and Mounaf Ramadan sharing the goals in a 4-0 win.

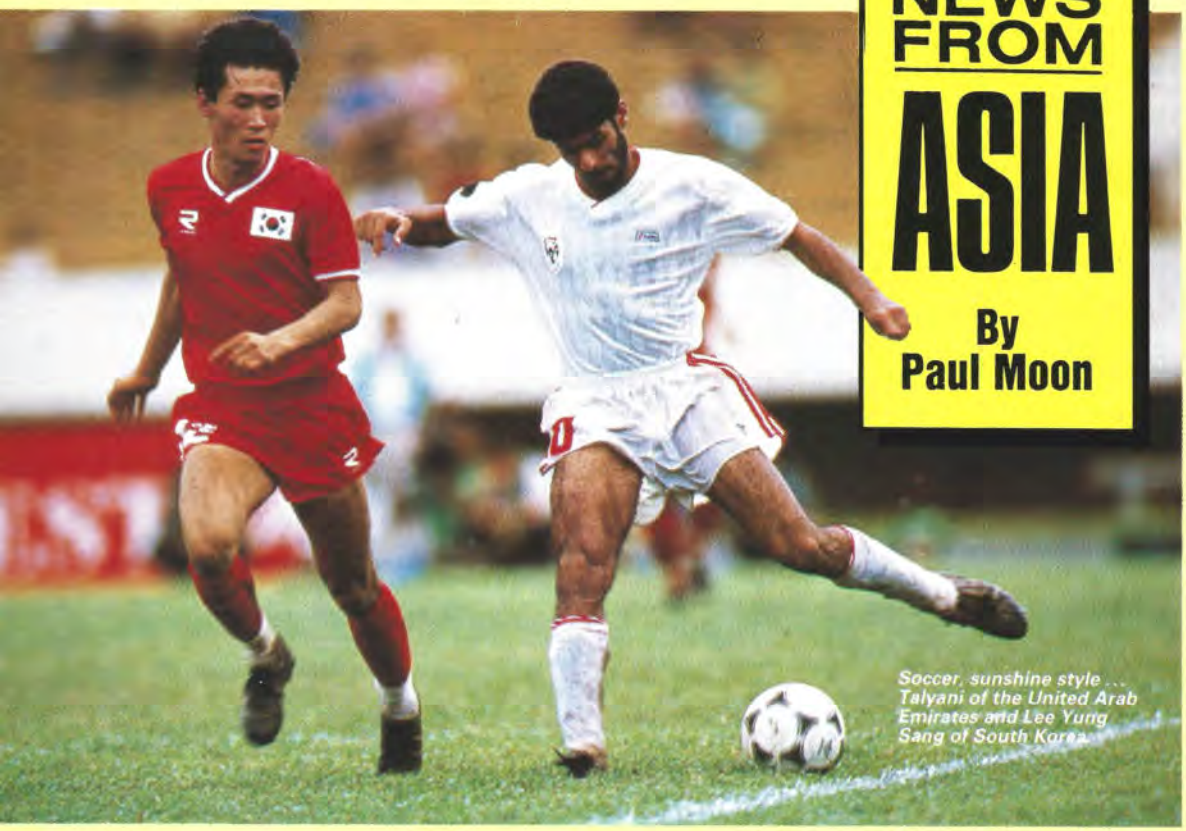
In the same group South Korea struggled in their opening game against a good Japanese side, before snatching a victory when Cho Jin-ho scored in the very last few seconds. This was an impressive performance from the Japanese, who had the ball in the net earlier in the match only to have the goal disallowed for offside.

In the second group North Korea showed they would also be a formidable force when they started with a 4-1 win over India.

Choi Yong-son scored in the first half, Choi Choi made it 2-0 just after the interval and Dang-hak sewed up the game with a penalty.

NEWS FROM ASIA

By Paul Moon



Soccer, sunshine style ... Talyani of the United Arab Emirates and Lee Yung Sang of South Korea

Violence mars East Bengal's treble

BY DABABRATA CHOWDHURY

SCENES of violence marred the Rovers Cup final in Calcutta and detracted from East Bengal's victory, which gave them a treble of trophies for the second time.

The match, against Mahindra and Mahindra – who also met East Bengal in the Durand Cup final – was subjected to repeated pitch invasions, and when referee Suvarna disallowed an East Bengal goal there was such an uproar that play had to be suspended for about an hour.

The disallowed goal, by substitute Debashish Sarkar, was scored while defender Farookh Ahmed was lying injured between the scorer and the goal.

On the resumption, East Bengal scored a legitimate goal, when Krishnana Dey crossed and Mastan Ahmed headed past the goalkeeper, Mohammed Qadeer.

This was enough to give East Bengal the trophy for the ninth time, level with Hyderabad Police and only two behind Mohun Bagan.

Losers

A goal by the captain, Cheama Okerie, gave East Bengal victory against East Rafa in one semi-final. Mahindra and Mahindra won their semi 2-1 in extra time against Salgaonkar of Goa, Baruah and Pereira scoring with one by Barreto for the losers in between.

The Durand Cup final in New Delhi appeared to be a one-sided affair in the first half, when East Bengal took a 2-0 lead with goals from Krishanu Dey and Sudip Chatterjee.

But the game changed altogether after the break, with Mushtaq Ali and Nandu Kotiya scoring for Mahindra and Mahindra.

Only a minute from time, Kuljit met a Krishanu pass and neatly tucked the ball in after side-stepping a defender.

Earlier in the season East Bengal had been awarded the IFA shield after their opponents, Mohammedan Sporting, had left the field in protest over a goal but the FA ordered the 1-0 score to stand, and suspended Mohammedan for three months.

This was only the third IFA-Durand-Rovers treble in Indian history. East Bengal won all three in 1972, and Mohun Bagan repeated the feat in 1977.

East Bengal, who had earlier in the season finished only one point behind Mohun Bagan in the Calcutta Super Division, might have won the Delhi Cloth Mills tournament as well if only they had taken even half their chances in the semi-final against Kyung Hee University of South Korea.

Scorers

In the end, East Bengal lost 3-2 in a penalty shootout, which was the way the Koreans won the final, 5-4, against Kerala Police. Ju Yong Kuk, the goalkeeper, was one of the Korean scorers.

Diamont of Cameroon won Mohun Bagan's Centenary Invitation tournament.

Roger Milla, one of the heroes of Italia' 90, played in two of the games.

P.K. Banerjee, one of the leading figures in Indian soccer, has been awarded an honorary diploma by the International Olympic Committee. He played for his country in 89 matches, including the Olympics of 1960, and scored 66 goals. Banerjee is now Mohun Bagan's technical director.

SELANGOR TAKE TITLE ON GOAL DIFFERENCE

BY PAUL MOON

SELANGOR and Singapore, traditionally the two dominant forces in Malaysian domestic soccer, have returned to the top after being overshadowed by Kuala Lumpur in recent seasons.

The old foes finished equal in points and goal differences at the top of the Dunhill Semi Professional League, with Selangor taking the title because of a slightly more potent attack – 37 goals compared with Singapore's 35.

Perak ended one point behind, with Kuala Lumpur a further five points adrift.

Selangor's resurgence was due largely to the form of veteran strikers Dollah Sallah and Zainal Abidin. Singapore owed much to the influence of Australian imports Alistair Edwards and Abbas Saad.

Sallah, Abidin and Edwards all notched nine goals – one fewer than Erwin Boban, Johor's Yugoslav striker, who topped the scoring chart.

Sallah appeared to have secured the double for Selangor when he scored twice within the opening half-hour of the F.A. Cup Final, against Perak.

But the crowd, almost entirely Selangor fans, were stunned when Perak scored four times within 25 minutes in the second half, to gain a remarkable victory.

Kwok quits as coach

HONG KONG's national coach, Kwok Ka-ming, has left the job as a result of the disappointing performance in the Asian Games.

His team won only one of their group matches, beating Yemen when it was too late to matter, and did not qualify for the quarter-finals.

Wong-Man-wai, who was assistant coach to the national team during most of Kwok's time in charge, takes over the top job. He has a good record with South China.

Lee Ping-hung of Lai Sun moves up to his assistant.

The Ernest Borel club, formerly known as See Bee, were the surprise early leaders of the Hong Kong League, undefeated after five games.

But their new striker, Brazilian Silva, was substituted as early as the second match.

South China (second) and Happy Valley (third) drew 0-0 before a crowd of 16,638, highest of the season so far.

South China win two, lose one

SOUTH CHINA'S stranglehold on Hong Kong soccer was momentarily loosened when Laisun beat them 1-0 in the Viceroy Cup Final.

But South, the colony's most successful club, gained revenge by the same scoreline to win the F.A. Cup.

In the League, there were never any doubts over the pecking order. South China lost only one game and finished 12 points ahead of Laisun, with Happy Valley a further five points adrift in third place.

KUWAIT have entered the qualifying competition for the Olympic Games, despite the occupation by Iraq.

There are only three places for Asia, being contested by 29 countries in six qualifying groups.

Five of them will play all their matches in one country, with only the sixth group – Indonesia, Japan, Hong Kong and Taiwan – playing on a home and away basis.

DHAKA University's hopes of a third successive Bangladeshi National Championship were ruined when the Army beat them 1-0 in the Sher-e-Bangla Gold Cup final before a crowd of 21,400 at Chittagong.

The students, with nine internationals, started as overwhelming favourites but were never allowed to get into top gear. A 35th-minute Zabbar goal gave the soldiers a well-deserved victory.

The championship, contested by 64 district selections, seven government department teams and two university sides over a period of less than a month, presents severe logistical problems at the best of times.

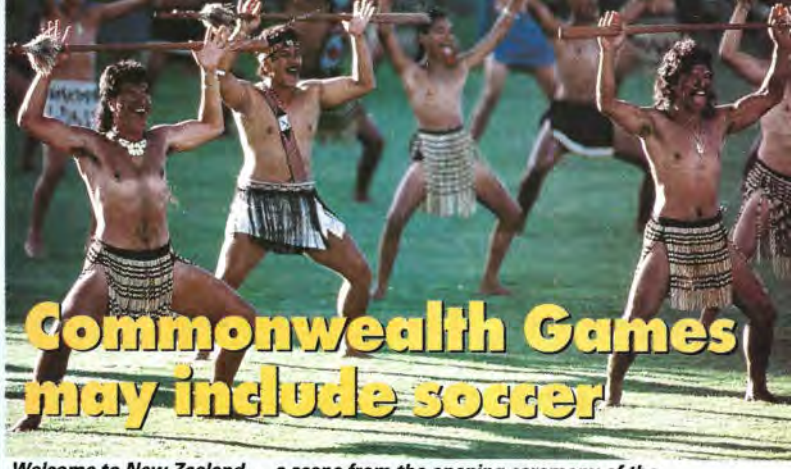
In view of the political turmoil and widespread communal rioting which coincided with the latest event, the Bangladesh Football Federation can be proud of completing with very few hitches.

A GOAL in the tenth minute of extra time, by Pichitphol Uthaikul, gave Port Authority a 2-1 win over Farmers Bank in the final of Thailand's A Division tournament.

Prepas Chamrasmee had put Port Authority ahead in the 62nd minute and Surchai Chaturaohatrapong equalised 17 minutes later.

NISSAN, who made a clean sweep of major domestic trophies in both previous seasons, promise to be equally dominant during the 1990-91 campaign, having already captured the Japan Soccer League Cup.

They beat Furukawa 3-1 in the final before an 8,000 crowd at Nagoya.



Commonwealth Games may include soccer

Welcome to New Zealand ... a scene from the opening ceremony of the 1990 Commonwealth Games in Auckland.

OCEANIA BY PAUL MOON

A REPORT prepared by a working party commissioned to provide guidelines for future Commonwealth Games has recommended that soccer be included from 1994 on.

The Games have changed very little since the first at Hamilton, Canada, in 1930. Only ten sports are staged and team sports have been avoided in order to prevent Olympic-size problems.

The report states, rightly, that soccer is the most popular sport within the Commonwealth and has a right to inclusion by virtue of this alone, so stimulating interest in the Games among Commonwealth Third World countries.

What the report doesn't mention in respect of soccer, but was probably its prime concern, is that both the last two Games (Edinburgh in 1986 and Auckland in 1990) lost a great deal of money, and soccer alone has the spectator appeal to turn around the finances of this great festival.

Only once has a Third World country staged the Games (Jamaica in 1966), the other 13 being shared between Britain, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. The report recognises that only the inclusion of soccer would make the Games financially viable for a developing nation to host.

If Games officials do accept soccer (they are to study the working party's final report next year), they will be confronted by severe logistical problems – not least the attitude of Britain's national associations.

British participation would be essential for the soccer tournament's finances and credibility but it is doubtful if they would view the event enthusiastically – particularly as Games years coincide with the World Cup.

It would be impractical to expect the British associations to field their senior selections, but an invitation to under-21 teams should be more appealing.

The finalising of a tournament format could be the source of many headaches. With over 50 soccer-playing nations in the Commonwealth, qualifying rounds would be desirable but, almost certainly, would be too awkward an undertaking to be considered seriously.

Probably the best solution would be to invite the seven national associations with the best records in the previous World Cup qualifying rounds to join the host nation – three from Europe, two from Africa, one from the CONCACAF region and one from Asia-Oceania.

If this system had been applied for a tournament in Auckland during the 1990 Games, it would have involved England, Scotland, Wales, Nigeria, Zambia, Trinidad and Tobago and Australia, as well as New Zealand, the hosts.

Similar line-ups in future would certainly generate spectator appeal and cash to give "The Friendly Games" the fillip they badly need.

CONLEY SWITCH STOPS AUCKLAND

CANTERBURY gained revenge for losing the Winfield Shield to Auckland by defeating them 2-1 in the inaugural Winfield Provincial Championship final.

Noel Barkley, whose suspect last-minute goal took the shield from Canterbury, needed only another 60 seconds to get on the scoresheet again.

Although playing in their own Mount Smart stadium and having most of the possession, the Aucks rarely threatened to score another goal, but lethargic Canterbury just couldn't get into the game – until Julian Bowden appeared as a 57th-minute substitute – a masterstroke by the Canterbury coach Terry Conley.

Bowden snatched an equaliser seven minutes from the end of regular time, and the revitalised southerners won the game two minutes into extra time when Alan Carville took advantage of a defensive blunder by veteran Keith Garland to hammer the ball home for Canty's second.

The win was particularly sweet for Conley, who had just been replaced as New Zealand youth team coach by Allan Jones – the Auckland FA's technical director.

VANUATU'S FIRST TITLE

VANUATU gained their first success at any level of international soccer when lifting the 1990 Melanesia Cup in New Caledonia with a two wins and two draws.

The hosts finished second, Fiji (winners of the two previous tournaments) were third, Solomon Islands fourth and Papua New Guinea last without a point.

Father Walter Lini, president of Vanuatu – known as New Hebrides until achieving independence in 1980 – declared a national holiday to celebrate the victory.

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Question

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SOB STORY

NEWS FROM AFRICA

BY MARK GLEESON

AFRICAN CHAMPIONS CUP 1990

PRELIMINARY ROUND

Al Ittihad v Olympic (Niger) 6-1; 0-2
MBC (Somalia) v St Louis (Seychelles) 1-0; 2-4
AS Sotema (Madagascar) v Botswana Defence Force XI 1-0; 1-2
Arsenals (Lesotho) v Denver Bundowns (Swaziland) 3-1; 3-0
Malindi (Tanzania) v Mukungwa (Rwanda) 0-0; 1-2
Inter FC (Burundi) v Petro Atletico (Angola) 2-0; 0-3
Asko de Kara (Togo) v ASFA Yannenga (Burkina Faso) 1-1; 2-0
Dragons Oueme (Benin) v Mighty Barolle (Liberia) 0-0; 0-3
Renaissance (Chad) v Stade Centrafricain (CAR) 2-2; 0-1

FIRST ROUND

Al Ahly (Egypt) v Al Ittihad 5-0; 3-0
Esperance (Tunisia) v Stade Malien (Mali) 2-0; 1-0
AFC Leoparde (Kenya) v St Louis 4-2; 3-3
Sunrise (Mauritius) v AS Sotema 4-1; 0-2
Nkana Red Devils (Zambia) v Express (Uganda) 3-1; 1-0
Ferroviaro Maputo (Mozambique) v Arsenals 1-0; 0-2
El Hilal (Sudan) v Mukungwa 4-0; 2-0
Dynamos (Zimbabwe) v Petro Atletico 1-1; 1-1 (Dynamos 5-4 pens)
Ashanti Kotoko (Ghana) v Freetown United (Sierre Leone) 4-0; 1-1
Royal Armed Forces (Morocco) v AS Kaloum (Guinea) 4-0; 1-1
JS Kabylie (Algeria) v ASKO Kara 6-0; 4-0
AS Sogara (Gabon) v Etoile Congo (Congo) 0-2; 0-1
Diaraf (Senegal) v Iwuanyanwu National (Nigeria) 1-0; 0-3
Daring Club Motema Pembe (Zaire) v Africa Sports (Cote d'Ivoire) 1-0; 0-3
Raja Casablanca (Morocco, holders) v Mighty Barolle 2-0; 1-2
Racing Bafoussam (Cameroon) v Stade Centrafricain 2-1; 0-0

SECOND ROUND

Al Ahly v Esperance 0-0; 0-0 (2-4 pens)
Sunrise v AFC Leopards 1-1; 0-3
Arsenals v Nkana Red Devils 0-3; 1-5
Dynamos v El Hilal 2-1; 0-1
Royal Armed Forces v Ashanti Kotoko 3-3; 0-1
Etoile Congo v JS Kabylis 2-2; 0-2
Africa Sports v Iwuanyanwu Nationale 1-1; 2-3
Racing Bafoussam Walkover v Raja Casablanca

QUARTER FINALS

Iwuanyanwu Nationale v Esperance 2-1; 1-1
Racing Bafoussam v Nkana Red Devils 0-1; 1-2
AFC Leopards v JS Kabylis 2-1; 0-3

SEMI-FINALS

Ashante Katoko v JS Kabylis 1-0; 0-2
Nkana Red Devils v Iwuanyanwu Nationale 1-0; 1-0

FINAL

JS Kabylie v Nkana Red Devils 1-0; 0-1 (JSK won 5-3 on pens)

President Kaunda weeps as fans attack player

ANGRY fans attacked a player and reduced Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda to tears in the African Champions' Cup final.

Kennedy Malitoli of Nkana Red Devils had to be rescued by police after his missed penalty had enabled Algerians Jeunesse Sportive Kabylie to win the shootout 5-3 in Lusaka.

Red Devils, who had been in sensational form throughout the competition, were expected to become the first southern African side to win the continental title.

They lost a lone penalty in the first leg in Algiers, but had a massive crowd in the Independence Stadium behind them for the return, despite the fact they are based more than 100 miles away, in Kitwe on the Zambian copper belt.

There was very little fire in the Red Devils in the second leg, though, and they could manage only a late penalty, coverted by Bwalya, to level the aggregate scores and force the game to a shootout, – African competition rules do not allow for extra time.

Malitoli's missed effort enabled Kabylie to stay 4-3 ahead in the sequence, and Medane made sure with Algeria's fifth kick. The home fans then stormed on and President Kaunda, a staunch soccer pundit openly wept at the sight.

Kabylie became the fourth Algerian side to win this competition, following Jeunesse Electronique, Mouloudia Alger and Entente Setif.

They certainly have the pedigree for African champions, having scored 21 goals in the 1990 competition and disposed of Ashante Kotoko of Ghana and Etoile Congo.

The holders, Raja Casablanca of Morocco, reached the second round but then withdrew because of a dispute over match dates.

After four previous semi-final appearances, Red Devils finally made it to a final. But they could not convert their skilful approach into goals in the decider and again a disciplined side from North Africa reigns as African champions.

Above and on facing page: scenes from the match that brought a crowd invasion and reduced a president to tears.

Kenneth Kaunda ... he wept as the fans stormed on to the pitch.

Uganda keep the cup

UGANDA won a second consecutive East and Central African Senior Challenge Cup, following their success in Kenya in 1989 with victory in Zanzibar.

The Ugandans, who beat Malawi in a penalty shootout in 1989, did not need to go to sudden death this time against Sudan, but spent much of the game on the receiving end.

Winger Majudi Musisi emerged as the hero of the Amani Stadium, laying on a first-half goal in the final for Sam Sssimba, then adding one near the end.

But the 1990 tournament certainly had a hollow ring about it with the withdrawal of favourites Zambia, who surprisingly have won this event only once.

Somalia and Ethiopia, after their 2-0 home defeat in the African Nations Cup to Tunisia, also were absent. Ethiopia had sacked their entire national team and coach Abiyenah Desta and pulled out of the tournament, leaving just three nations in Group B – Uganda, Sudan and Kenya.

Group A turned out to be a bitter dog-fight, and Tanzania and hosts Zanaibar made it through to the semi-finals at the expense of Malawi, the 1988 winners, and Zimbabwe.

All four ended with the same number of points, Tanzania clinching top spot in their final group match with a 2-0 win over Zimbabwe, and Zanzibar edging out Malawi on the fact they had beaten them in group play. This despite the fact both sides had the same goall difference.

Zanzibar went out in extra time in their semi-final to Sudan, who qualified for only their second final appearance.

UDEAC CUP

GROUP A (Congo, Chad, Equatorial Guinea)

Congo 3 (Bakana, N'Gapy pen; Buelor) Chad 0

Chad 1 (Samba) Equatorial Guinea 0

Congo 6 (N'Gapy 3, Bakana 2, N'Gatsono) Equatorial Guinea 0

	P	W	D	L	F	APts
Congo	2	2	0	0	9	0 4
Chad	2	1	0	1	1	3 2
E. Guinea	2	0	0	2	0	7 0

GROUP B (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Gabon)

Cameroon 2 (Bolemen, Ebwelle) Gabon 1 (Angoue)

Gabon 1 (Minko)

Cameroon 3 (Ebwelle, Barga, Dang) 0

	P	W	D	L	F	APts
Cameroon	2	2	0	0	5	1 4
Gabon	2	1	0	1	2	2 2

SEMI FINALS

Congo 1 (N'Gapy) Gabon 0

Cameroon 1 (Bebey) Chad 0. Aet

FIFTH PLACE PLAY-OFF

3 Equatorial Guinea 3 (CAR won 5-4 on pens)

THIRD PLACE PLAY-OFF

Chad 2 (Bba, N'Doram) Gabon 1 (Ondo)

FINAL

Congo 2 (N'Gapy, Makita) Cameroon 1 (Ebwelle)

PREVIOUS WINNERS

1984 - Cameroon
1985 - Gabon
1986 - Cameroon
1987 - Cameroon
1988 - Gabon
1989 - Cameroon

EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN SENIOR CHALLENGE CUP

GROUP A (Zanaibar, Malawi, Tanzania, Zimbabwe)

Zanzibar 0 Tanzania 0

Malawi 0 Zimbabwe 0

Malawi 1 (Chancy Gondwe 20) Tanzania 0

Zanzibar 0 Zimbabwe 1 (Carlos Max)

Zanzibar 2 (Juma Bakiri-Kibishi 36; Amour Aziz 43) Malawi 1 (MacDonald Singo 68)

Tanzania 2 Zimbabwe 0

	P	W	D	L	F	APts
Tanzania	3	1	1	1	2	1 3
Zanzibar	3	1	1	1	2	2 3
Malawi	3	1	1	1	2	2 3
Zimbabwe	3	1	1	1	1	2 3

GROUP B (Kenya, Sudan, Uganda)

Kenya 2 (Alfayo Odongo; Joseph Owino) Uganda 2 (Majidu Musisi pen; Robert Alora)

Kenya 1 (Henry Motego 68) Sudan 2 (Hassan Santo 47; Abdel Atta 53)

Sudan 2 (Hamid Ismail 12; Abdul Mukhtasa 50) Uganda 2 (Sam Kabugo 7; Robert Alora 77)

	P	W	D	L	F	APts
Sudan	2	1	1	0	4	3 3
Uganda	2	0	2	0	4	4 2
Kenya	2	0	1	1	3	4 1

SEMI-FINALS

Tanzania 1 (Zamoyoni Mogella 25) Uganda 1 (Jackson Mayanja 27). Aet (Uganda won 6-5 on pens)

Zanzibar 0 Sudan 1 (Fath Ibrahim 99) Aet

THIRD PLACE PLAY-OFF

Zanzibar 1 Tanzania 2

FINAL

Sudan 0 Uganda 2 (Sam Szimba 34; Majudi Musisi 84)

PREVIOUS WINNERS

1973 - Uganda (in Uganda)
1974 - Tanzania (Tanzania)
1975 - Kenya (Zambia)
1976 - Uganda (Zanaibar)
1977 - Uganda (Somalia)
1978 - Malawi (Malawi)
1979 - Malawi (Kenya)
1980 - Sudan (Sudan)
1981 - Kenya (Tanzania)
1982 - Kenya (Uganda)
1983 - Kenya (Kenya)
1984 - Zambia (Uganda)
1985 - Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe)
1986 - No tournament
1987 - Ethiopia (Ethiopia)
1988 - Malawi (Malawi)
1989 - Uganda (Kenya)

AFRICAN CHAMPIONS CUP 1991

Preliminary Round

Ifodigi Ataka Pame (Togo) v Sahel FC (Niger)

Royal Lesotho Defence Force v Pamba SC (Tanzania)

Tempete Mocafe (Central African Rep) v Petro Atletico (Angola)

Denver Sundowns (Swaziland) v Gaborone United (Botswana)

ASF (Madagascar) v St Louis (Seychelles)

Somalia champions v Addis Ababa Brewery (Ethiopia)

First Round

JS Kabylie (Algeria) v Tout-Pussihant Elect Sportive (Chad)

Winners Togo/Niger v Wydad Casablanca (Morocco)

National SC (Egypt) v Winners Somalia/Ethiopia

Bor Mahia (Kenya) v Highlanders (Zimbabwe)

Hearts of Oak (Ghana) v Winners CAR/Angola

Al Ittihad (Libya) v ASEC Abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire)

Union Douala (Cameroon) v Etoile Filante (Burkina Faso)

Inter Club (Congo) v Vital O (Burundi)

Nkana Red Devils (Zambia) v Winners Madagascar/Seychelles

Sunrico FC (Mauritius) v Winners Swaziland/Botswana

Iwuanyanwu Nationale (Nigeria) v Old Edwardians (Sierre Leone)

FC Lupopo (Zaire) v JAC (Gabon)

El Merreikh (Sudan) v Nakivubo Villa (Uganda)

Matchedje (Mozambique) v Winners Lesotho/Tanzania

Club Africain (Tunisia) v Renquins Atlantique (Benin)

UCST (Senegal) v Djoliba (Mali)

AFRICAN CUP-WINNERS' CUP 1991

Preliminary Round

Premiero Agosto (Angola) v Nashua Black Africa (Namibia)

Small Simba (Tanzania) v Mbabane Highlanders (Swaziland)

Olympic FC (Niger) v Faca FC (Central African Rep)

Plasance FC (Seychelles) v River Tex (Kenya)

First Round

Linguere (Senegal) v Entente Setif (Algeria)

Stagnoa (Cote d'Ivoire) v Stade Malien (Mali)

Rennaissance (Chad) v Arab Contractors (Egypt)

BFC (Madagascar) v Kampala City Council (Uganda)

ASFA (Burkina Faso) v Ashante Kotoko (Ghana)

AS Marsa (Tunisia) v Port Authority (Sierre Leone)

Shell FC (Gabon) v Stationery Stores (Nigeria)

Arsenal (Lesotho) v Inter Star (Burundi)

Dragons Oueme (Benin) v BCC Lions (Nigeria, holders)

Ground Force (Ethiopia) v Al Madina (Libya)

Winner Seychelles/Kenya v Zambian cup winners

Winner Tanzania/Swaziland v Al Ittihad (Sudan)

Semassi de Sokode (Togo) v CS Daring Motema Pemba (Zaire)

Winner Niger/CAR v Prevoyance FC (Cameroon)

Winner Angola/Namibia v Diables Noire (Congo)

Dynamos (Zimbabwe) v Maxaquene (Mozambique)

DIARY

World Soccer's global news service conducted by Keir Radnedge

OBITUARY

JOAO Mendonca AZEVEDO, former Portuguese international goalkeeper, died at the new year, aged 75 in his home town of Barreiro. Joao Azevedo was the second outstanding Portugal keeper to die within a matter of weeks – after the 1960s Benfica star, Alberto da Costa Pereira. Azevedo was born in Barreiro in 1915, played first for FC Luso and joined Sporting Club of Portugal in September, 1935. Azevedo almost immediately replaced Artur Dyson in goal – making his debut as a second-half substitute in a 5-2 win over Benfica. Azevedo played in goal for Sporting for 16 years. He is considered by many as having been Portugal's finest goalkeeper ever, playing 19 times for the national team for whom he made his debut in a 2-1 win over Spain in Vigo in November, 1937. The worst moments of Azevedo's career came ten years later, in a home international against England. Azevedo was substituted halfway through a disastrous 10-0 defeat (England's first, a Tommy Lawton header, flew past Azevedo after just 17 seconds).

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6

FAROE ISLANDS: The federation announces plans for work to start on the laying of two grass pitches – one in the capital, Thorshavn, the other in Toftir, a 20-minute ferry away. It is hoped the Thorshavn pitch will be available for the Faroes' next European championship home match – against Northern Ireland next September.

ITALY: Maradona is ordered by a court to submit to a blood test in the continuing paternity case brought by Cristina Sinagra.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7

ACTION: In France Nice and Bordeaux draw 0-0, while Monaco are held 1-1 at Rennes ... in West Germany all three matches are drawn – between Dortmund and Leverkusen, Koln and Karlsruhe, Borussia Monchengladbach and Kaiserslautern.

JAPAN: Milan star Ruud Gullit, in Tokyo for the World Club Cup against Olimpia, dismisses speculation that injury problems could shortly lead to a parting of the ways with Milan.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8

ACTION: Anderlecht keep up the Belgian pressure with a 1-0 win away to Lokeren ... in Holland two goals from John Bosman lead PSV Eindhoven to a 5-1 victory over Fortuna Sittard ... Sporting hit another top-of-the-table setback in Portugal, losing 2-0 at home to derby rivals Benfica ... a Rodax penalty brings Atletico Madrid a 1-0 win away to Cadiz in Spain ... Bayern Munich regain the league leadership in West Germany thanks to a 1-0 victory over Nurnberg, owed to a 29th-minute goal from Wohlfarth.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9

ACTION: Milan retain the World Club Cup, beating Olimpia of Asuncion 3-0 in Tokyo. Rijkaard (two) and Stroppa score the goals ... BCC Lions of Nigeria win the African Cup-winners' Cup 4-1 on aggregate after holding Club Africain to a 1-1 draw in the second leg of the final in Tunisia ... Newell's Old Boys win the big match in Argentina, defeating early-season leaders Boca Juniors to stay one point clear of River Plate ... Sao Paulo and Corinthians overcome Gremio and Bahia respectively to make it a Paulista derby final in the Brazilian championship ... French champions Marseille suffer their heaviest defeat since Bernard Tapie's takeover in 1986, as they crash 4-0 to title rivals Auxerre – for whom Enzo Scifo is a goalscoring star ... Dutch champions Ajax crush old, weak rivals Feyenoord 4-0 in Rotterdam ... Inter go clear at the top in Italy thanks to a remarkable 5-1 win away to Cesena thanks to two goals from Matthaus ... Porto stay top in Portugal after beating Maritimo 3-1 ... goals from Sanchez, Butragueno and Losada bring reviving Real Madrid a 3-0 home win over Tenerife but they remain five points behind Barcelona, who win 2-0 in Zaragoza.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 10

FRANCE: The French players' union threatens to go on strike for the last three matches of the season if the league goes ahead with cost-cutting measures agreed over the weekend by club presidents. The most controversial measure is a proposal to reduce professional playing staffs from 21 players to 19.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11

ACTION: Former winners Leverkusen slide out of the UEFA Cup, held goalless at home by Brondby and beaten 3-0 on aggregate. Moscow Torpedo beat Monaco ... in Algiers, Algeria draw 0-0 with England in a match which sees Manchester United midfielder Neil Webb sent off.

FRANCE: Auxerre are added to the list of clubs caught up in the French game's financial tangle. Le Canard Enchaine alleges that tax inspectors found the club had syphoned off £46,000 from gate receipts in the 1986-87 season. In the continuing inquiries over financial irregularities at Marseille, stars Papin, Vercruysse, Forster and Giresse are all said to have received non-returnable loans ... top referee Michel Vautrot says he will retire after controlling tomorrow's Partizan v Internazionale tie in the UEFA Cup. He says: "Referees are criticised far too heavily nowadays. There is too much money involved in the game."

HOLLAND: PSV Lose 2-1 at home to Everton in a friendly.

HUNGARY: Pecs sell international midfielder Balanz Berczy to Beerschot of Belgium.

NORWAY: The IOC, meeting in Lillehammer, offers a slight hope to South Africa by envisaging the depatch of a fact-finding mission to see how apartheid is being dismantled both politically and in sport. IOC acceptance for South Africa's return would swiftly be followed by FIFA.

SPAIN: Barcelona's Bulgarian star, Hristo Stoichkov, is suspended for ten weeks for treading on the referee's foot as part of his dissent in the stormy Supercup clash against Real Madrid.

UNITED STATES: The US squad for the following day's game against Portugal sees a first call-up for Ernie Stewart of the Dutch club Willem II ... Honolulu becomes the first US city to formally enter a bid to stage 1994 World Cup finals matches.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12

ACTION: Brazil are held goalless for a fourth successive match, this time by Mexico in Los Angeles ... Atalanta (beating Koln), Bologna (defeating Admira in extra-time), Roma (beating Bordeaux), Anderlecht (on away goals against Dortmund), Sporting Lisbon (beating Vitesse) and Internazionale (against Partizan) reach the quarter-finals of the UEFA Cup.

FRANCE: Metz sign Dutch striker Henk Vos on loan from Standard Liege to plug the gap left by injuries to British forward David Hodgson and Eric Black, who is being forced to retire prematurely because of injury.

ITALY: Diego Maradona says he has no option but to leave Napoli at the season's end after being dropped for the league game against Atalanta ... former Milan and Italy keeper Giorgio Ghezzi dies at 60.

SPAIN: Real Madrid clinch the Supercup, beating Barcelona 4-1 (5-1 on aggregate) in the home second leg.

UNITED STATES: USSF president Alan Rothenberg writes to FIFA president Joao Havelange urging practical experiments for suggestions to brighten up the game by opening the way to more goals.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13

BRAZIL: Corinthians beat city neighbours Sao Paulo 1-0 in the first leg of the final of the Brazilian national championship. Neto scores the decisive goal after four minutes.

HOLLAND: Ruud Gullit is included in the European championship squad to face Malta.

ITALY: Diego Maradona is summoned by the FIGC disciplinary committee for ignoring a previous request to explain critical remarks about a referee.

PORTUGAL: Yet again, living in hope, Portugal manager Artur Jorge names Paulo Futre in his squad for the friendly against the United States.

SWITZERLAND: FIFA's executive decides to rearrange the World Cup qualifiers to guarantee Africa three teams in the finals in 1994. Costa Rica are banned from age limit tournaments for two years; Colombia are banned from staging home matches in national team and international club events; Sweden's UEFA president Lennart Johansson is appointed to chair a commission to consider changing the laws.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14

BELGIUM: Champions Brugge win 1-0 away to RWD Molenbeek.

FRANCE: Marseille re-sign former international defender William Ayache, who had been transfer-listed by Bordeaux after injury problems.

HOLLAND: Feyenoord win 1-0 away to Heracles in the second round of the Dutch cup despite having Henk Fraser and loan Sabau sent off. Hungary's Jozsef Kiprich scores the decisive goal. In one other tie, Roda beat Emmen 4-0 ... Ajax officials welcome proposals to build a new 50,000-capacity stadium in Amsterdam. Director Uri Coronel says: "A new stadium has become a matter of survival for us. We want to become a leading club in Europe again and that is not possible under present arrangements."

POLAND: International defender Janusz Gora is lined up for a move to Queen's Park Rangers after a short trial.

SCOTLAND: Ally MacLeod, Scotland's 1978 World Cup boss, quits as manager of Ayr.

SPAIN: Luis Suarez names a predictable squad of 16 for the European championship tie with Albania.

UNITED STATES: Philadelphia considers applying for World Cup finals matches at the Veterans Stadium.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15

ACTION: The Dutch cup second round sees a further victory for PSV (2-1 v Pec/Zwolle) but a 1-0 defeat for Twente at Dordrecht ... Benfica draw 2-2 away to Farense in Portugal ... a 78th-minute goal from Valverde brings Bilbao a 1-0 home victory over Real Madrid ... in Turkey Galatasaray win 2-1 away to Aydinspor to extend their top-of-the-table lead over Besiktas to five points ... in West Germany Bayern Munich waste a chance to regain the league leadership when they can only draw 1-1 away to Bayer Uerdingen.

GERMANY: Berti Vogts includes five former East German internationals in his national squad for the Unification substitute friendly against Switzerland. They are Sammer, Kirsten, Doll Thom and goalkeeper Perry Brautigam, of Jena, the only one of the five still based in the East.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16

ACTION: In Belgium Anderlecht win 3-1 away to Cercle to move within one point of leaders Gent ... Brazil's national championship goes to Corinthians, who beat neighbours Sao Paulo 1-0 again in the return leg of the final. Tupazinho scores the decisive goal in a match which explodes in the second half with the expulsions of Mano (Corinthians) and Bernando (Sao Paulo) ... in France Jean-Pierre Papin scores his first league goals for two months as Marseille beat Metz 3-0 ... Savichev and Protasov scores two goals apiece as Olympiakos thrash Panahaiki 6-0 to stay joint top with Panathinaikos ... in the Dutch cup Excelsior crash 5-0 to Ajax, who are without Richard Witschge because of the flu virus which will probably cause him to miss the midweek European tie against Malta ... Milan skipper Franco Baresi pulls a muscle in the goalless draw away to Roma and will probably miss the following weekend's European championship tie against Cyprus ... goals from Beguiristain and Baquero against Cadiz keep Barcelona six points clear of second-placed Atletico Madrid ... the autumn championship of the Swiss league ends with Sion (despite a 1-1 draw away to Neuchatel Xamax) three points clear of Grasshoppers at the top.

SWITZERLAND: FIFA awards Malaysia host rights to the 1997 World Youth Cup.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 17

FRANCE: Franz Beckenbauer threatens to quit as Marseille coach over his personality and management clash with president Bernard Tapie. Beckenbauer says: "We will talk over the next few days but if we can't get things sorted out then this has all been a big misunderstanding."

ITALY: Bari agree to release Argentine World Cup Final defender Nestor Lorenzo to Swindon ... Italy call up uncapped Stefano Eranio (Genoa), Diego Fuser

(Fiorentina) and Attilio Lombardo (Sampdoria) for the European tie against Cyprus.

SWITZERLAND: Gary Lineker, of Tottenham and England, is awarded FIFA's annual Fair Play Trophy in recognition of never having been booked or sent off during his professional career.

UNITED STATES: The US'94 office reports that 11 cities have so far shown formal interest in staging finals matches.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18

ACTION: An England XI beat an Italia '90 line-up 4-0 at White Hart Lane, London, in a testimonial match for England's record international goalkeeper, Peter Shilton ... Malta lose 4-1 at home to Holland in a European under-21 championship tie.

ENGLAND: The FA reject a request from Gordon Taylor, chief executive of the players' union (the PFA), for an easing of a three-game ban on Arsenal captain for his expulsion at Luton on December 8.

SWITZERLAND: The draw is made for the quarter-finals of the European club tournaments. Champions' Cup: Moscow Spartak v Real Madrid, Milan v Marseille, Red Star v Dynamo Dresden, Bayern Munich v FC Porto. Cup-winners' Cup: Kiev Dynamo v Barcelona, Manchester United v Montpellier, Legia Warsaw v Sampdoria, FC Liege v Juventus. UEFA Cup: Bologna v Sporting Lisbon, Moscow Torpedo v Brondbyernes, Atalanta v Internazionale, Roma v Anderlecht. Ties to be played on March 6 and 20.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19

ACTION: Plenty of goals in the European championship with Holland winning 8-0 in Malta and Spain thrashing Albania 9-0 in Seville ... in the Unification Friendly, Germany beat Switzerland 4-0 in Stuttgart ... in other friendlies Poland beat Greece 2-1 and Portugal defeat the United States 1-0.

ENGLAND: Tony Adams, the Arsenal and England defender, is jailed for four months after pleading guilty to reckless and drunken driving.

FRANCE: Marseille president Bernard Tapie boasts that if Beckenbauer goes he will be replaced by "a great technician of the same calibre – a man with European Cup experience, who has already won it." Tapie adds: "For the moment Beckenbauer is still with us but I'm not going to allow things to stay as they are."

PORTUGAL: Sporting sign 24-year-old Bulgarian international Krasimir Balakov from Etar Tirnovo.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20

ACTION: Uganda beat Sudan 2-0 in Zanzibar to retain the East and Central Africa Senior Challenge Cup.

ALBANIA: Ilin Sirma and Albert Stroni, members of Albania's under-21 squad, stay in Spain to ask for political asylum.

BRAZIL: CBF president Ricardo Teixeira says that the 1991 Brazilian national championship will be run on a proper 'Italian' league basis.

FINLAND: International midfielder Ari Heikinen is to undergo a trial with Brighton.

FRANCE: Marseille president Tapie announces that Beckenbauer will stay on, but that a new coach would be appointed to work under him. Tapie says: "I made a mistake in believing that overnight you can turn the national manager of Germany into a club coach in France. It doesn't work like that. If we had allowed time, then at the end of one-and-a-half or two years, he would have succeeded of course. The talent is there. But we didn't allow time. The fact is that when you don't speak the language at all, when you are learning a new kind of football and when you arrive in mid-season, you need someone else on the technical staff."

ITALY: A formal inquiry into the poor state of pitches in the World Cup venues including Milan and Rome considers faulty drainage one of the key faults.

SPAIN: A disciplinary appeal panel raises the ban on Barcelona star Hristo Stoichkov from ten games to six months.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21

FRANCE: England veteran Glenn Hoddle, out of action for 16 months with knee trouble, buys his release from his Monaco contract ... Auxerre crash 3-0 at home to Cannes in a major surprise in the league.

ITALY: Sports Minister Carlo Tognoli says there are no grounds for criminal action in the courts over World Cup pitch problems at Rome, Milan, Turin and Genoa. The only solution was to re-turf.

SPAIN: Barcelona appeal against the six-month suspension handed out to Hristo Stoichkov.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22

ACTION: Italy beat Cyprus 4-0 in a European championship tie in Limassol ... in Argentina River Plate lose 2-1 at home to Velez, so Newell's extend their lead to two points ... in the Belgian cup Anderlecht go down 2-0 at home to Brugge ... the French league match between Toulon and Paris Saint-Germain is stopped after 44 minutes when a linesman has to be carried off after being struck by a missile thrown from the crowd ... PSV Eindhoven win 2-0 away against Twente Enschede.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23

ACTION: French champions Marseille move four points clear despite being held goalless at Caen ... a late penalty from veteran Anastopulos brings Olympiakos a 1-1 draw against OFI in Greece and keeps them level with Panathinaikos at the top ... Porto, Sporting and Benfica all win in Portugal with four points covering them at the top of the table.

FRANCE: Raymond Goethals, the veteran Belgian coach sacked by Bordeaux after three matches of the season, is appointed new Marseille coach in a major shock. Beckenbauer moves "upstairs" as technical director ... the Paris magazine, France Football, names Lothar Matthaus of Inter and Germany as the 1990 European Footballer of the Year. Leading points-winners: Matthaus (Italy 137; Schillaci (Italy) 84; Andy Brehme (Germany) 68; Gascoigne (England) 43; Baresi (Italy) 37; Klinsman (Germany) and Scifo (Belgium) 12 each; Baggio (Italy) 8; Rijkaard (Holland) 7; Buchwald (Germany) 6.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 24

SPAIN: Colombian World Cup midfielder Leonel Alvarez tells Valladolid that he will be flying in, at last, later this week.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25

ITALY: Lazio star Ruben Sosa takes advantage of a holiday visit to Spain to try to resolve the row in which his agent, former Spain winger Carlos Lapetra, is claiming £250,000 as his percentage of the transfer deal which took Sosa from Zaragoza to Italy.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 26

FRANCE: Reports in England link Marseille forward Chris Waddle with a return home at the season's end to join Newcastle – his original club – or Liverpool.

WEST GERMANY: Paul Breitner, 1974 World Cup-winner, criticises what he sees as excessively harsh terms imposed by the DFB in their takeover of East German football.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27

SPAIN: Betis sign Czechoslovak World Cup midfielder Michal Bilek from Sparta Prague.

URUGUAY: Penarol's Adrian Paz and Jorge Goncalvez are banned by the South American confederation from international matches at national team and club level for harassing Chilean referee Hernan Silva during the Supercup semi-final defeat by Olimpia of Paraguay.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28

FRANCE: Nancy are warned by FIFA that unless they pay Swiss club Xamax Neuchatel the transfer fee owed on Poland midfiedler Ryszard Tarasiewicz he will be suspended indefinitely.

YUGOSLAVIA: Red Star midfielder Robert Prosinecki, on his way to Spain with his father on holiday, denies having signed pre-contracts with either Milan or Real Madrid.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29

CAMEROON: At last Cameroon sort out the row over bonuses owed to their World Cup heroes. Sports Minister Ibrahim Mbombo Njoya promises that the monies will be paid – up to £55,000 each.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 31

ITALY: Milan star Ruud Gullit obtains his divorce from his wife Yvonne. Reports say she will receive £9,000 a month for life under the terms of the separation.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 1

ENGLAND: Paul Gascoigne is sent off by referee Vic Callow for swearing at the official in Tottenham's 2-1 defeat at home to Manchester United.

SWITZERLAND: St Louis Storm of the United States are the opening day stars of the Zurich International indoor tournament. The Storm beat Luzern and Dinamo Zagreb and draw with Nurnberg.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2

CZECHOSLOVAKIA: Banik Ostrava goalkeeper Pavel Srnicek starts a trial with English second division club Newcastle.

FINLAND: Ari Heikkinen's prospective transfer from TPs Turku to Brighton is called off after TPs demand the £150,000 fee in one lump sum.

FRANCE: Cameroon veteran Roger Milla is voted African Footballer of the Year in the annual poll organised by France Football. Milla is the first player to win the award twice, his previous success having come all of 14 years earlier.

SWITZERLAND: St Louis Storm win the Zurich International indoor tournament, following up their first-day successes by defeating Zurich 4-0 in the final.

Vialli ... two goals for Sampdoria in their win over Internazionale.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30

ACTION: Gianluca Vialli scores twice as Sampdoria defeat Inter 3-1 to leapfrog over their rivals and back to the top of the Italian championship ... in Portugal Porto beat Guimaraes 2-0 to retain top spot ahead of Benfica while Sporting lose 2-1 to Gil Vicente and fall further adrift ... Real Madrid fans run amok after the Spanish champions crash sensationally by 4-0 at home to Osasuna for whom Poland's Jan Urban scores a hat-trick.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 3

BELGIUM: Enzo Scifo is voted second in the Belgian Sportsman of the Year poll behind cyclist Rudy Dhaenens.

Continued over

DIARY *Continued*

FRANCE: New Bordeaux president Alain Afflelou warns that Bordeaux face a survival dilemma. The club are £30million now in debt but if they declare themselves bankrupt they will be automatically relegated at the end of the season and thus lack the playing base from which to rebuild. Federation president Jean Fournet-Fayard insists there can be no exceptions to the bankruptcy/relegation rule.

HUNGARY: National manager Kalman Meszoly names his squad for the Nehru Cup to travel out on January 9.

ITALY: Police announce that 67 Fiorentina fans, guilty of causing trouble and damage at the Juventus game on December 2, have been banned from attending stadia for one year ... Diego Maradona, absent for two weeks over Christmas, returns to training with Napoli and says he will be fit to face Juventus on Sunday – playing against the club with whom he has been linked in transfer rumours.

SWITZERLAND: FIFA general secretary Sepp Blatter says that the age limit for World Cup referees must be lowered to the early 40s because older officials had proved incapable of maintaining fitness over a series of matches in a short space of time.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 4

ENGLAND: Sweden's Glenn Hysen (Liverpool) and Anders Limpar (Arsenal) are included in the Football League squad to face the Italian League in Naples.

FRANCE: Bordeaux businessman Jean-Pierre Derose says he cannot go through with the financial rescue package he had planned.

UNITED STATES: Atlanta joins the queue of cities interested in staging World Cup matches.

WEST GERMANY: Josef Hickersberger, sacked as manager of Austria after the autumn defeat by the Faroe Islands, is appointed coach to first division Fortuna Dusseldorf.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5

ACTION: In Spain Bilbao lose 2-0 at home to Valencia.

CAMEROON: Philippe Redon, from the French second division club Creteil, is named new manager of Cameroon. Redon is a former team-mate of Roger Milla at Saint-Etienne ... the start of the new domestic season is postponed after a 60,000 crowd at a music festival smash up the Reunification Stadium in Douala.

SPAIN: Johan Cruyff says he will be signing a contract extension with Barcelona to keep him in the Catalan capital until the summer of 1993.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 6

ACTION: In Albania Flamurtari maintain a three-point lead despite losing 1-0 at home to Labinoti ... Greek league leaders Olympiakos and Panathinaikos continue neck-and-neck. Both clubs win again ... in Italy Sampdoria surprisingly lose 2-1 at home in a stormy game against Torino, while Inter regain the league leadership after beating Napoli 1-0 in a game which sees Napoli goalkeeper Galli and midfielder Crippa sent off ... Portuguese league leaders FC Porto draw 0-0 away to Penafiel so Benfica, 3-2 winners at Gil Vicente, move within one point of Porto ... Real Madrid win 2-0 away to Gijon with goals from Michel and Butragueno; Barcelona stay six points clear of Atletico at the top thanks to a 2-1 home win over Logrones.

MONDAY, JANUARY 7

EAST GERMANY: Hans-Georg Moldenauer, head of football in what was East Germany, appeals for help from Western German clubs to ensure the survival of soccer in East Germany. He wants affiliation agreements between eastern and western clubs so eastern clubs can borrow outstanding reserve players to help improve both the standards of play and attendances.

FRANCE: Players threaten to go on strike in three weeks' time in protest at club plans to water down the freedom of contract regulations.

SPAIN: Real Madrid president Ramon Mendoza and his board submit their resignations to go before an extraordinary meeting of members for a vote of confidence.

WEST GERMANY: Bayern Munich sell international midfielder Hans Dorfner back to his original club, Nurnberg ... at an awards ceremony in Bonn, Gary Lineker is presented with the FIFA Fair Play award, Toto Schillaci receives his World Cup top scorer award and Hristo Stoichkov and Hugo Sanchez receive their joint Golden Boot as the top league scorers in Europe in 1989-90.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 8

ITALY: Brazil star Careca threatens to walk out on Napoli and Italian football in protest at refereeing decisions such as those which upset Napoli against Inter on Sunday ... police report that a total of 300 fans were arrested on Sunday and early Monday after hooligan violence around Italy in Turin, Genoa and Florence.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9

BELGIUM: Franky Van der Elst of Brugge is voted Footballer of the Year with 313 votes. Runner-up is Anderlecht's Brazilian Luis Oliveira with 202 votes; third is team-mate Luc Nilis with 105 votes. Enzo Scifo was not eligible because he plays outside Belgium.

BRAZIL: The CBF announces a clampdown on excessive celebrations of goals such as those by Corinthians national championship-winning star Neto, who is renowned for climbing fences in his delight.

ITALY: Inter beat Torino 2-1 in an Italian cup third round first leg match. Martin Vazquez gives Torino a third-minute lead, Matthaus and Bergomi turn the game around in the last seven minutes ... Diego Maradona is suspended for one match by the disciplinary commission for dissent during Napoli's weekend defeat by Inter. Napoli president Corrado Ferlaino hits out at the federation, attacking the appointment of Paolo Casarin to oversee refereeing appointments "when he was not so long ago offered a job by Juventus." ... Maradona is named in the Italian League squad to face the Football League in Naples.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10

EAST GERMANY: Rot Weiss Erfurt are delighted when Kaiserslautern, from the West, agree to make an instant £250,000 down-payment of half of the eventual end-of-season transfer of striker Thomas Vogel. Kaiserslautern official Rainer Geye says the advance payment is being volunteered "to help stabilise east German soccer."

FRANCE: Marseille sign up yet another member of the coaching staff in former Nice boss Jean Fernandez – a former Marseille player who quit Nice in December after falling out with the fans. Already on the Marseille coaching/managerial staff are Michel Hidalgo, Franz Beckenbauer, Raymond Goethals, Jean Castaneda, Holger Osieck and Henri Stambouli.

ITALY: Diego Maradona is suspended for one game by the FIGC for insulting the referee during last Sunday's 1-0 defeat of Napoli by Juventus.

PORTUGAL: Yet again the Portuguese federation is told by Paulo Futre that he will turn up to appear in the forthcoming European championship tie against Greece.

SWEDEN: Liverpool defender Glenn Hysen announces his retirement from the national team after 10 years and 68 caps. Hysen, who has recently become a father for the second time, says he hopes to spend more time with his family. Sweden manager Tommy Svensson does not entirely rule out the possibility that Hysen may be persuaded to return for the European finals in 18 months' time.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 11

ACTION: The Soviet Union beat Zambia 4-0 on the opening day of the annual Nehru Cup tournament in Trivandrum.

BELGIUM: Anderlecht open the second half of the league campaign by roundly defeating Antwerp 3-0.

ENGLAND: Chelsea are fined £105,000 by the Football League for making irregular payments to players. Chairman Ken Bates calls the decision "vindictive".

FRANCE: The league orders that the Toulouse v Paris SG game, abandoned after a linesman was laid low by a missile, be replayed.

WEST GERMANY: Cameroon World Cup hero Roger Milla agrees to sign a promotional contract with adidas worth £75,000-a-year which involves him playing for Schalke, in the German second division, on a match-fee basis. Schalke president Gunter Eichberg flies to Paris to finalise the deal, saying: "Fans all over the world took this man to their hearts during the World Cup. He will fill our stadium every game."

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12

ACTION: Gent maintain their league leadership in Belgium by defeating FC Liege 1-0 ... no change in Portugal with victories for Porto, Benfica and Sporting ... another disaster for Real Madrid as the Spanish champions crash 3-0 at home to neighbours Atletico and have Sanchis and Maqueda sent off.

FRANCE: Bordeaux president Alain Afflelou says he may, after all, have found a way to escape both bankruptcy and automatic relegation. This depends on confirming rescue agreements with creditors.

ITALY: Diego Maradona is in the wars yet again, this time fined £35,000 by the FIGC in response to Napoli's complaint about his breaking the terms of his contract with his early-season indiscipline – in particular his refusal to conform with the club's arrangements to play Fiorentina in the Italian Cup and to play Moscow Spartak in the Champions' Cup.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13

ACTION: Flamurtari win the Albanian Supercup, defeating Dinamo on penalties after a 3-3 draw ... Belgian champions Brugge slip back as they are held 1-1 at home by Mechelen ... skipper Jean-Pierre Papin shoots four goals as Marseille open the spring season in France with a 7-0 thrashing of Lyon ... a teenage fan is killed in Athens after being hit by a firework before AEK's game against Olympiakos. Later the match is abandoned in the 84th minute when a smoke bomb is thrown on the pitch ... Ajax restart their season with a goalless draw away to Sparta Rotterdam ... Juventus seize the Italian league leadership (on goal difference ahead of Inter) courtesy of a 5-1 away victory over Pisa ... Spanish leaders Barcelona lose their second league game of the season as they go down 1-0 away to Oviedo. This cuts their lead over Atletico Madrid to four points.

SOUTH AFRICA: Tragedy at a pre-season friendly between top clubs Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates. A controversial goal for Kaizer Chiefs provokes fighting in the crowd, a terrace stampede and the deaths of 40 spectators and injuries to more than 50. This is the worst soccer disaster in African football history.

MONDAY, JANUARY 14

ACTION: India lose 3-0 to Romania in the Nehru Cup while defending title-holders Hungary draw 1-1 with the Soviet Union.

EAST GERMANY: Torlauf Ardut, top scorer of second division Rotation Berlin, begins a trial with English club Ipswich.

HOLLAND: Feyenoord buy Dutch international midfielder Rob Witschge from Saint-Etienne ... RKC Waalwijk, according to Dutch police, are at the centre of tax evasion inquiries over the club's accounts between 1984 and 1990. The fraud squad raid 14 addresses, including the homes of manager, coach and former directors.

ITALY: Genoa defeat Atalanta 2-0 in a replay of the league match postponed from the previous day because of torrential rain ... Diego Maradona flies home to Argentina, to visit his sick father, and promises that he will quit soccer if Napoli do not release him at the season's end to return to Buenos Aires to play out the last years of his career with Boca Juniors. His flight means he will miss the Italian League's match against the English League. Napoli team-mate Careca is called up as replacement with Lazio's Gabriele Pin deputising for injured Karlheinz Riedle. Frank Rijkaard, injured at the weekend, also pulls out of the Italian League squad.

SOUTH AFRICA: National Soccer League officials open an inquiry into the death stampede at the match between Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 15

ACTION: Zambia draw 0-0 with China in the Nehru Cup.

BRAZIL: Jose Roberto Wright is voted the world's top referee by the World Referees Federation.

FRANCE: The professional players decide to meet on Friday to consider whether to continue planning for an indefinite strike or put that on ice pending the league's offer to refer plans on contract reform to the Supreme Court.

HOLLAND: PSV's Brazilian striker Romario faces a heavy fine after refusing to join the party for a tour of India ... Feyenoord step up their attempts to buy Holland striker Wim Kieft from French crisis club Bordeaux.

ITALY: Milan fans protest at the club's increase in ticket prices for the Champions' Cup tie against Marseille. Best seats will cost £100 with the cheapest tickets at £10.

SPAIN: Five hooligan fans are arrested in connection with the stabbing to death of a 20-year-old Frenchman at Sunday's Espanol v Gijon game in Barcelona.

WEST GERMANY: Schalke coach Aleksander Ristic promises no favours for Cameroon's Roger Milla. The formal signing of contracts has been delayed until Thursday but Ristic hopes Milla will be available for training tomorrow.

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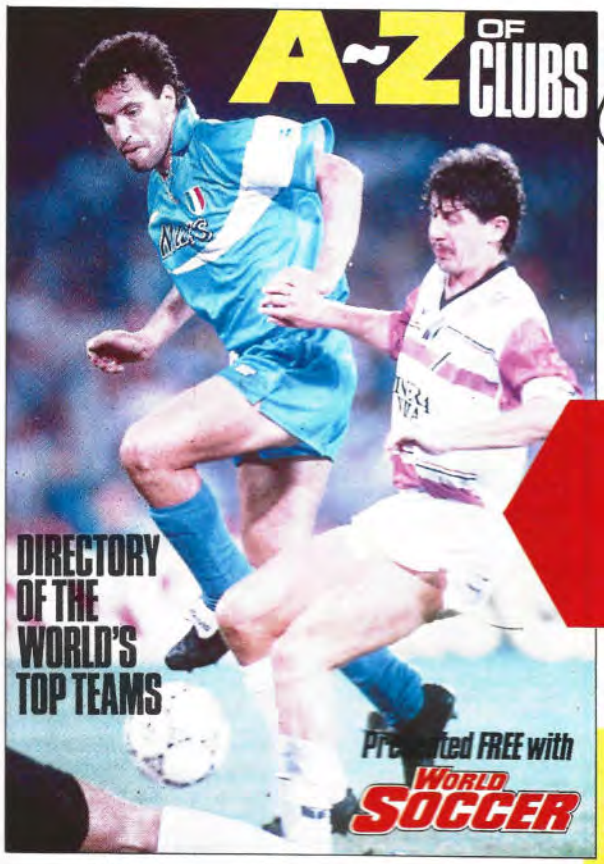

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EUROPEAN LEAGUE RESULTS

Klinsmann ... among the goals for his club and for his country.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2

SPAIN Castellon 0, Sevilla 0. Att: 13,100.
Barcelona 2 (Eusebio 18, Goicoechea 57), Mallorca 1 (Claudio 71). Att: 79,300.
At Madrid 4 (Rodax 25pen, Manolo 75, 89, Tomas 86), Zaragoza 0. Att: 29,100.
Gijon 3 (Juan Jose og 33, Luhovy 35, 51), Cadiz 1 (Jose 80pen). Att: 27,100.
Osasuna 3 (Ciganda 40, Urban 48, Cholo 66), Real Sociedad 1 (Aldridge 73pen). Att: 28,200.
Bilbao 1 (Andrinua 31), Logrones 1 (Gilson 53). Att: 36,500.
Tenerife 1 (Eduardo 31), Oviedo 2 (Elcacho 13, Sarriugarte 89). Att: 19,300.
Valladolid 0, Real Madrid 1 (Hugo Sanchez 7). Att: 8,600.
Betis 1 (Mel 8), Espanol 2 (Wuttke 12, Diaz 45). Att: 23,200.
Burgos 0, Valencia 0. Att: 17,400.

WEST GERMANY
Bochum 0, Fortuna Dusseldorf 0. Att: 12,000.
Cup 3rd rnd: Koln 1, Meppen 0; MSV Duisburg 3, BW Berlin 2
Saarbrucken 0, Eintracht Frankfurt 0; Hamburg 1, Wattenscheid 2
Werder Bremen 3, Schalke 1; Uerdingen 4, RW Essen 2; Preussen Munster 0, Stuttgart 1; Remscheid 2, Hessen Kassel 3.

WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 9

BELGIUM Beerschot 0, Charleroi 2 (Wuyts 63, Hurtado 90). Att: 3,000.
Mechelen 2 (P Versavel 35, Ingosson 88pen), Germinal Ekeren 1 (Hofmans 12). Att: 7,200.
St Truiden 1 (Cnops 19), Liege 1 (Malbasa 64). Att: 6,000.
Standard 3 (Nassen 17, Hellers 80, Schaessens 88), Racing Genk 1 (L Van der Elst 18). Att: 7,000.
Waregem 2 (Nakhid 20, Boes 65), Brugge 2 (Ceulemans 74, Disztl 79). Att: 6,500.
Lokeren 0, Anderlecht 1 (Oliveira 81). Att: 8,000.
Cercle 2 (Raskin 3, Weber 86), Kortrijk 0. Att: 1,100.
Antwerp 4 (Lehnhoff 41, 90, Van Rooij 43pen, Czerniatynski 59), AA Gent 1 (Hallaert 64). Att: 9,000.

FRANCE
Caen 4 (Divert 5, 85, Den Boer 56, Point 83), Metz 1 (Calderaro 30). Att: 7,487.
Lyon v Nantes pstpnd.
Nice 0, Bordeaux 0. Att: 4,092.
Auxerre 4 (Cocard 5, Roche 48, Scifo 51, Kovacs 52), Marseille 0. Att: 18,500.
Montpellier 2 (Valderrama 1, Xuereb 44), Toulouse 0. Att: 10,391.

Toulon 0, Cannes 0. Att: 4,500.
Rennes 1 (Omam Biyik 65), Monaco 1 (Djorkaeff 74). Att: 8,422.
Nancy 1 (Zitelli 60), Lille 1 (Sauvaget 13). Att: 4,000.
Sochaux 2 (Priou 14, Thomas 80), Saint-Etienne 0. Att: 3,500.
Brest v Paris SG pstpnd.

GREECE
Midweek.- Cup, 2nd rnd, 1st legs (selected): Larissa 0, Apollon 0; Proodeftiki 1, Panathinaikos 2; Haravgiakos 0, AEK 3
Olympiakos 2, PAOK 0; Panseraikos 3, OFI 1; Ionikos 3, Ethnikos Astir 0; Athinaikos 2, Aris 1; Iraklis 0, Xanthi 0.
Weekend: Panahaiki 0, OFI 0.
Levadiakos 2, Serres 1.
Apollon 1, Olympiakos 1.
Athinaikos 1, Larissa 1.
PAOK 2, Iraklis 1.
Aris 1, Panathinaikos 0.
Ionikos 1, Doxa Drama 1.
Xanthi 1, Panionios 1.
AEK 0, Ioannina 1.

HOLLAND Den Haag 3 (Van Eijkeren 62, 89, Schellevis 75), Sparta 0. Att: 6,000.
Roda 1 (Diliberto 71), SVV Schiedam 0. Att: 3,500.
RKC Waalwijk 1 (Boogers 50), Vitesse 1 (Loeffen 63). Att: 3,500.
Heerenveen 2 (Van Dijk 8, 26), Willem II 1 (Stewart 23). Att: 5,400.
PSV 5 (Bosman 13, 80, Vanenburg 39, Koeman 40, Schoepers 87), Fortuna 1 (Linford 36). Att: 25,200.
MVV Maastricht 2 (Delahaye 16, Francois 88), Twente 1 (Mulder 44). Att: 3,100.
NEC Nijmegen 0, Groningen 3 (Huizingh 7, Meijer 22, 65). Att: 2,200.
Utrecht 1 (Smolarek 32), Volendam 0. Att: 5,450.
Feyenoord 0, Ajax 4 (Fraser og 17, Bergkamp 32, 54pen, Wouters 44). Att: 46,000.

ITALY
Atalanta 0, Napoli 0. Att: 16,000.
Cesena 1 (Ciocci 21pen), Inter 5 (Klinsmann 5, Matthaus 51
Serena 56, Pizzi 79, Barcella og 90). Att: 22,080.
Fiorentina 1 (Buso 45), Bari 1 (Joao Paulo 37). Att: 22,289.
Lazio 1 (Riedle 44pen), Genoa 1 (Ruotolo 49). Att: 30,000.
Lecce 2 (Marino 7, Virdis 90), Cagliari 0. Att: 12,000.
Milan v Pisa pstpnd.
Parma 1 (Melli 12), Bologna 1 (Turkyilmaz 87). Att: 17,000.
Sampdoria v Roma pstpnd.
Torino v Juventus pstpnd.

PORTUGAL
Sporting 0, Benfica 2.
Nacional 1, Boavista 1.
Braga 0, Guimaraes 0.
Estrela Amadora 0, Farense 1.
Chaves 1, Gil Vicente 1.
Setubal 3, Salgueiros 1.
Famalicao 0, Penafiel 0.
Tirsense 2, Beira-Mar 0.
Porto 3, Maritimo 1.
Uniao Madeira 1, Belenenses 1.

SPAIN Midweek.- Supercup, 1st leg: Barcelona 0, Real Madrid 1 (Michel 55). *Stoichkov sent off, 41min (also Barcelona coach Cruyff).

Weekend: Sevilla 1 (Polster 41), Burgos 2 (Ayucar 82pen, Juric 87). Att: 35,000.
Mallorca 0, Castellon 0. Att: 8,000.
Zaragoza 0, Barcelona 2 (Bakero 29, Amor 89). Att: 25,000.
Cadiz 0, At Madrid 1 (Rodax 50pen). Att: 7,000.
Real Sociedad 1 (Aldridge 18), Gijon 0. Att: 12,000.
Logrones v Osasuna pstpnd.
Oviedo v Bilbao pstpnd.
Real Madrid 3 (Butragueno 41, Sanchez 46, Losada 74), Tenerife 0. Att: 80,000.
Espanol 2 (Ogris 43, Wuttke 77), Valladolid 0. Att: 30,000.
Valencia 3 (Cuxart 10, 83, Arroyo 56), Betis 1 (Jose Luis 54). Att: 30,000.

SWITZERLAND
Midweek: Luzern 1, Servette 3.

Weekend: Aarau 1, Xamax Neuchatel 3.
Lugano v Lausanne pstpnd.
Servette 0, St Gallen 2.
Sion 2, Grasshoppers 1.
Young Boys 6, Wettingen 1.
Zurich 1, Luzern 0.

WEST GERMANY Borussia Dortmund 1 (Wegmann 13), Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Thom 8). Att: 29,000.
Koln 0, Karlsruhe 0. Att: 9,000.
Borussia Mg 2 (Criens 21, 52), Kaiserslautern 2 (Labbadia 44 50). Att: 28,000.
Werder Bremen 3 (K Allofs 51, Rufer 63, 84), Fortuna D'dorf 1 (Demandt 82). Att: 16,700.
Bayern Munich 1 (Wohlfarth 34), Nurnberg 0. Att: 29,000.
Hertha Berlin 0, Bayer Uerdingen 0. Att: 14,250.
Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Turowski 72), St Pauli 1 (Zander 80). Att: 13,250.
Hamburg 2 (Beiersdirfer 46, Von Heesen 88), Stuttgart 0. Att: 17,500.
Wattenscheid 0, Bochum 4 (Stefan Kohn 19, Nehl 62, Peschel 88 90). Att: 32,000.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16

BELGIUM Beerschot 1 (Prince Polley 26), Standard 2 (Berczy og 66, Hellers 79). Att: 3,000.
St Truiden 0, Gent 0. Att: 9,000.
Mechelen 2 (Eijkelkamp 12, Ingesson 37), Lierse 0. Att: 8,200.
FC Liege 2 (Foguenne 53, Krncevic 57), Racing Genk 1 (Busuttil 24). Att: 6,000.
Antwerp 2 (Czerniatynski 29, Van Rooij 47), Kortrijk 2 (Mostahinic 63, Vannevel 77). Att: 3,000.
Cercle 1 (Karacic 58), Anderlecht 3 (Van Loen 46, Oliveira 54 Lamptey 65). Att: 7,000.
Lokeren 2 (Meszaros 35, 84), Germinal Ekeren 5 (Schmoller 3, 77 86, Bartholomeussen 56, Hofmans 64). Att: 4,000.
RWD Molenbeek 0, Club Brugge 1 (Borkelmans 29). Att: 5,000.
Waregem 0, Charleroi 0. Att: 3,000.

FRANCE
Nantes 0, Lille 0. Att: 6,000.
Bordeaux 1 (Fargeon 69), Caen 1 (Divert 74). Att: 17,000.
Marseille 3 (Papin 34pen, 79, Waddle 84), Metz 0. Att: 24,885.
Toulouse 1 (Marcico 2pen), Nice 2 (Radanovic 6, Langers 53). Att: 5,176.
Cannes 3 (Guerit 57, Micciche 59, Simba 77), Lyon 2 (Cabanas 79pen, Ngotty 85. Att: 3,500.
Monaco 0, Auxerre 0. Att: 6,000.
St-Etienne v Toulon pstpnd.
Paris SG 1 (Perez 72), Rennes 1 (Laurent Delamontagne 30). Att: 10,000.
Sochaux v Montpellier pstpnd.
Brest 3 (Cloarec 34, Salaun 71, Kane 88), Nancy 3 (Gava 10 Tarasiewicz 44, Rabesandratana 49). Att: 7,000.

GREECE
AEK 2, Ionikos 0.
Ioannina 0, Xanthi 0.
Doxa Drama 1, PAOK 0.
Iraklis 5, Apollon 2.
Larisa 2, Levadiakos 1.
Olympiakos 6, Panahaiki 0.
OFI 0, Serres 0.
Panathinaikos 2, Athinaikos 1.
Panionios 0, Aris 0.

ITALY Midweek: Torino 1 (Policano 24), Juventus 1 (Baggio 77). Att: 25,000.

Weekend:
Bari 1 (Raducioiu 28), Sampdoria 1 (Lombardo 8). Att: 35,000.
Bologna 1 (Notaristefano 61), Lecce 1 (Morello 13). Att: 20,000.
Genoa 4 (Branco 7, Ruotolo 43, Skuhravy 55, Ciocci og 85), Cesena 1 (Ciocci 30). Att: 25,000.
Inter 1 (Matthaus 49pen), Fiorentina 1 (Fuser 30). Att: 50,000.
Juventus 2 (Di Canio 14, Marocchi 20), Cagliari 2 (Cornacchia 34 Cappioli 73). Att: 30,000.
Napoli 2 (Careca 4, Incocciati 22), Lazio 1 (Sosa 17). Att: 45,000.
Parma 1 (Melli 24), Atalanta 0. Att: 16,000.
Pisa 2 (Padovano 3, Piovanelli 40), Torino 0. Att: 12,000.
Roma 0, Milan 0. Att: 59,412.

PORTUGAL
Farense 2, Benfica 2.
Estrela Amadora 0, Uniao 0.
Belenenses 2, Nacional 3.
Boavista 2, Setubal 1.
Salgueiros 3, Famalicao 1.
Penafiel 2, Braga 0.
Guimaraes 1, Chaves 1.
Gil Vicente 0, Tirsense 0.
Beira-Mar 1, FC Porto 2.
Maritimo 1, Sporting 0.

SPAIN Sevilla 1 (Polster 41), Mallorca 0. Att: 30,000.
Castellon 0, Zaragoza 0. Att: 10,000.
Barcelona 2 (Beguiristain 14, Bakero 75), Cadiz 0. Att: 80,000.
At Madrid 4 (Manolo 7pen, 72, Sabas 86, Schuster 89), Real Sociedad 0. Att: 45,000.
Gijon 1 (Luhovy 74), Logrones 0. Att: 17,000.
Osasuna 0, Oviedo 0. Att: 18,000.
Bilbao 1 (Valverde 78), Real Madrid 0. Att: 42,000.
Tenerife 2 (Redondo 51, Tonio 87), Espanol 0. Att: 19,000.
Valladolid 3 (Fonseca 2, Cuca 58, Eloy 89), Valencia 1 (Caminero 72). Att: 15,000.
Burgos 1 (Barbaric 46), Betis 2 (Ivanov 1, Puma Rodriguez 14). Att: 10,000.

SWITZERLAND
Grasshoppers 2, Lugano 0.
Lausanne 1, Aarau 0.
Luzern 3, Young Boys 2.
Neuchatel 1, Sion 1.
St Gallen 3, Zurich 0.
Wettingen 1, Servette 3.

WEST GERMANY Bochum 1 (Legat 84pen), Werder Bremen 2 (Rufer 20, 57). Att: 14,250.
Nurnberg v Wattenscheid pstpnd.
Fortuna 4 (T Allofs 32, 36, 83, Schutz 47), Borussia Mg 1 (Kastenmaier 5). Att: 22,000.
Kaiserslautern v Koln pstpnd.
Karlsruhe v Hamburg pstpnd.
St Pauli 0, Borussia Dortmund 2 (Lusch 70, Wegmann 72). Att: 16,870.
Bayer Leverkusen v Hertha Berlin pstpnd.
Bayer Uerdingen 1 (Fach 85), Bayern Munich 1 (Wohlfarth 55). Att: 17,200.
Stuttgart 2 (Buchwald 48, Sverrisson 62), Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Bein 89). Att: 19,000.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23

BELGIUM Cup: Liege 3, Genk 1; Charleoi 5, Wavre 0; Lommel 0, Racing Mechelen 0 (Lommel on pens); Anderlecht 0, Brugge 2; Antwerp 2 Hoogstraten 0; ZL 0, Lokeren 3; Beveren 1, Standard 0; Tongeren 1, Mechelen 2 aet.

FRANCE Auxerre 0, Cannes 3 (Simba 36, 67, Stopyra 86). Att: 3,000.
Nancy v Sochaux pstpnd.
Toulon v Paris SG abandoned 44min.
Metz v Nantes pstpnd.
Lille 0, Bordeaux 0. Att: 9,300.
Caen 0, Marseille 0. Att: 12,593.
Lyon 4 (Cabanas 6, 51, 83pen, Bouafia 18), Toulouse 1 (Demol 22pen). Att: 15,475.
Montpellier 2 (Guerin 8, Xuereb 35), Monaco 1 (Rui Barros 57). Att: 15,000.
Nice 2 (Radanovic 46, Mazzuchetti 67), Saint-Etienne 0. Att: 6,625.
Rennes 3 (Laurent Delamontagne 40, Omam Biyik 80, Senoussi 89), Brest 0. Att: 17,853.

GREECE
Xanthi 2, Ionikos 0.
Arias 3, Ioannina 0.
PAOK 1, AEK 1.
Athinaikos 0, Panionios 0.
Olympiakos 1, OFI 1.
Apollon 1, Doxa 0.
Panseraikos 0, Larisa 0.
Levadiakos 0, Panathinaikos 0.
Panahaiki 3, Iraklis 2.

HOLLAND Sparta v Ajax pstpnd.
SVV 4 (Vonk 24, Luhukay 30, Van Velzen 36, Breetveld 34), Den Haag 2 (Lems 29pen, Valk 68). Att: 3,918.
Vitesse 1 (Van der Brom 1), Roda 3 (Boerebach 35, Verhagen 47 Hofman 59). Att: 6,000.
Willem II 4 (Van Geel 26, 32, 58, Stewart 62), RKC 2 (Moniz 54 Brands 78). Att: 5,500.
Fortuna 1 (Doufikar 11), Heerenveen 0. Att: 4,000.
Twente 0, PSV 2 (Bosman 43, Popescu 49). Att: 7,500.
Groningen 2 (Djurovski 3, 53), MVV 1 (Driessen 75). Att: 13,804.
Volendam 0, NEC 0. Att: 3,400.
Utrecht 2 (Smolarek 45, De Kruyff 80), Feyenoord 0. Att: 15,000.

PORTUGAL
Benfica 3 (William 15, Ricardo 38, Valdo 78), Maritimo 1 (Guedes 65).
Sporting 2 (Leal 53, Gomez 68), Beira-Mar 0.
FC Porto 2 (Geraldao 23pen, 66), Gil Vicente 0.
Tirsense 1, Guimaraes 0.
Chaves 2, Penafiel 2.
Braga 3, Salgueiros 0.
Setubal 2, Belenenses 0.
Farense 0, Uniao 0.
Nacional 0, Estrela Amadora 0.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30

GREECE AEK 1, Apollon 1.
Ioannina 1, Athinaikos 0.
Doxa 0, Panahaiki 0.
Iraklis 0, Olympiakos 2.
Ionikos 0, Aris 0.
Xanthi 1, PAOK 2.
OFI 2, Larissa 0.
Panathinaikos 2, Serres 0.
Panionios 2, Levadiakos 1.

ITALY Atalanta 2 (Bordin 3, Caniggia 25), Roma 2 (Bigliardi og 51 Giannini 62). Att: 20,000.
Cagliari 1 (Fonseca 9), Genoa 0. Att: 25,000.
Cesena 0, Napoli 0. Att: 9,000.
Fiorentina 1 (Fuser 14), Bologna 0. Att: 27,054.
Lazio 0, Pisa 0. Att: 25,000.
Lecce 1 (Morello 34), Bari 1 (Soda 87). Att: 26,000.
Milan 2 (Ancelotti 46, Gullit 54), Juventus 0. Att: 85,000.
Sampdoria 3 (Vialli 1, 82pen, Mancini 86), Inter 1 (Berti 50). Att: 40,000.
Torino 0, Parma 0. Att: 30,000.

PORTUGAL
Uniao 1, Nacional 0.
Estrela 2, Setubal 2.
Belenenses 0, Famalicao 0.
Boavista 2, Braga 0.
Salgueiros 1, Chaves 0.
Penafiel 1, Tirsense 0.
Guimaraes 0, Porto 2 (Kostadinov 51, Paille 89).
Gil Vicente 2 (Mangonga 50, Foma 74), Sporting 1 (Gomes 38).
Beira-Mar 0, Benfica 1 (Paneureu 13).

SPAIN Logrones 0, At Madrid 1 (Manolo 78pen). Att: 13,000.
Real Madrid 0, Osasuna 4 (Urban 17, 38, 52, Larrainzar 56). Att: 47,000.
Mallorca 0, Burgos 0. Att: 16,000.
Zaragoza 2 (Pardeza 34, Higuera 45), Sevilla 0. Att: 28,000.
Cadiz 0, Castellon 0. Att: 12,000.
Oviedo 0, Gijon 0. Att: 27,200.
Espanol 1 (Wuttke 82), Bilbao 2 (Valverde 22, Ripodas 65). Att: 36,000.
Valencia 4 (Fernando 2, 22, Cuxart 6, 20), Tenerife 2 (Francis 26, R Fernandez 80). Att: 35,000.
Betis 0, Valencia 0. Att: 23,000.

SWITZERLAND
Lugano 3, Lausanne 2.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 6

GREECE Iraklis 2, OFI 0.
Larisa 1 (Vutiritsas 60), Panathinaikos 2 (Mavridis 25 Georgakopulos 74).
Olympiakos 4 (Savidis 2, Anastopulos 29pen, Sofianopoulos 72 86), Doxa 0.
Panseraikos 1, Panionios 2.
Panahaiki 0, AEK 2.
Levadiakos 1, Ioannina 0.
Apollon 2, Xanthi 1.
Athinaikos 2, Ionikos 0.
Aris 0, PAOK 1.

ITALY Atalanta 3 (Nicolini 19pen, Caniggia 21, Perone 23, Cesena 0. Att: 25,000.
Bari 2 (Raducioiu 14, Cucchi 86pen), Pisa 0. Att: 30,000.
Bologna 1 (Turkyilmaz 35), Milan 1 (Gullit 8). Att: 40,000.
Fiorentina 1 (Dell'Oglio 45), Lazio 1 (Sosa 17). Att: 25,000.
Inter 2 (Matthaus 15, Klinsmann 53), Genoa 1 (Eranio 70). Att: 46,000.
Juventus 1 (Casiraghi 88), Napoli 0. Att: 50,000.
Parma 0, Lecce 0. Att: 15,000.
Roma 0, Cagliari 0. Att: 43,000.
Sampdoria 1 (Vialli 89pen), Torino 2 (Bresciani 22pen, 88). Att: 35,000.

PORTUGAL Beira-Mar 1, Maritimo 0.
Penafiel 0, FC Porto 0.
Salgueiros 1, Tirsense 0.
Boavista 2, Chaves 0.
Belenenses 1, Braga 1.
Estrela 1, Famalicao 1.
Uniao 1, Setubal 1.
Nacional 3, Farense 1.
Gil Vicente 2 (Jose Carlos 58pen, Rosado 82), Benfica 3 (Vata Garcia 11, Rui Aguas 26pen, William 40).
Guimaraes 1 (Basaula Lembe 38), Sporting 1 (Hamilton Careca 44).

SPAIN Mallorca 3 (Nadal 3, 27, Vulic 48pen), Zaragoza 2 (Higuera 65 Pablo 67). Att: 11,200.
Sevilla 2 (Serrano 30, Polster 73), Cadiz 1 (Jose 88pen). Att: 39,300.
Castellon 1 (Alcaniz 9), Real Sociedad 1 (Aldridge 75). Att: 13,100.
Barcelona 2 (Alesanco 69, Bakero 78), Logrones 1 (Quique Setien 47). Att: 72,600.

EUROPEAN LEAGUE RESULTS

At Madrid 0, Oviedo 0. Att: 52,800.
Gijon 0, Real Madrid 2 (Michel 32, Butragueno 81). Att: 19,700.
Osasuna 1 (Urban 48), Espanol 0. Att: 27,900.
Bilbao 0, Valencia 2 (Roberto 45, Penev 46pen). Att: 31,400.
Tenerife 1 (Pier 45), Betis 1 (Julio 83). Att: 19,500.
Burgos 0, Valladolid 1 (Vilches 10). Att: 16,800.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, JANUARY 13

BELGIUM Gent 1, Liege 0.
Charleroi 0, RWDM 0.
Lierse 0, Lokeren 2.
Anderlecht 3, Antwerp 0.
Genk 2, Beerschot 0.
Standard 1, Waregem 0.
Brugge 1, Mechelen 1.
Ekeren 6, Cercle 1.
Kortrijk 0, St Truiden 1.

FRANCE Monaco 2 (Petit 12, Clement 62), Nantes 1 (Ndoram 61). Att: 3,000.
Sochaux 1 (Prat 18), Caen 0. Att: 4,000.
Bordeaux 1 (Dugarry 10), Metz 1 (Romano 60). Att: 5,500.
Toulouse 2 (Acosta 45, Delpech 60).
Lille 2 (Asadouriam 19, Debu og 85). Att: 4,500.
Marseille 7 (Vercruysse 32, Papin 37, 55, 75, 90, German 63, 83).
Lyon 0. Att: 35,000.
Cannes 2 (Bray 48, Guerit 72), Nice 1 (Langers 68pen). Att: 6,000.
St-Etienne 2 (Deguerville 58, Laurey 75), Auxerre 1 (Dutuel 18). Att: 15,000.
Paris SG 2 (Susic 58, Angloma 85), Montpellier 0. Att: 12,500.
Brest 2 (Ferrer 8, Salaun 50), Toulon 2 (Revelles 13, Marquet 39). Att: 5,000.
Nancy 0, Rennes 0. Att: 5,000.

GREECE
OFI 1 (Vlastos 83pen), Panathinaikos 3 (Kurbanas 15, Saravakos 40, 70pen).
Doxa 1, Iraklis 1.
Panionios 0, Larisa 0.
AEK 1 (Georgiadis 13), Olympiakos 2 (Tsiantakis 5, Tsaluhidis 73), match abandoned at 84min.
Ioannina 1, Panserraikos 0.
Xanthi 2, Panahaiki 0.
Ionikos 1, Levadiakos 0.
Aris 3, Apollon 1.
PAOK 1, Athinaikos 0.

HOLLAND Sparta 0, Ajax 0. Att: 15,000.
Cup, 3rd rnd: Roda 2, Utrecht 1; Vitesse 3, Den Haag 1.

ITALY
Cagliari 0, Bologna 0. Att: 25,000.
Cesena 0, Parma 1 (Brolin 45). Att: 14,000.
Genoa v Atalanta pstpnd.
Lazio 0, Inter 0. Att: 60,000.
Lecce 1 (Pasculli 67), Sampdoria 0. Att: 25,000.
Milan 2 (Gullit 31, Brambati og 57), Bari 0. Att: 75,000.
Napoli 1 (Zola 15), Roma 1 (Salsano 65). Att: 50,000.
Pisa 1 (Simeone 59), Juventus 5 (Casiraghi 20, 49, 73, Baggio 36 80). Att: 22,000.
Torino 1 (Bresciani 19), Fiorentina 1 (Savatori 84). Att: 28,000.

PORTUGAL
Porto 3 (Perreira 15, Domingos 43, Abilio 87), Salgueiros 0.
Benfica 2 (Vitor Paneira 11, Erwin Sanchez 61), Guimaraes 0.
Sporting 2 (Gomes 53, 75), Penafiel 0.
Tirsense 4, Boavista 4.
Chaves 2, Belenenses 0.
Braga 1, Estrela Amadora 0.
Famalicao 1, Uniao 0.
Setubal 2, Nacional 0.
Farense 3, Beira-Mar 2.
Maritimo 1, Gil Vicente 0.

SPAIN Burgos 0, Zaragoza 1 (Poyet 46). Att: 16,300.
Cadiz 1 (Dertycia 39), Mallorca 0. Att: 18,200.
Valladolid 6 (Fonseca 19pen, 37, Moya 22, 34, 70, Revert og 55).
Tenerife 2 (Rommel 16, Francis 57pen). Att: 16,100.
Real Sociedad 1 (Aldridge 44), Sevilla 1 (Polster 19). Att: 19,400.
Logrones 2 (Alfredo og 31, Setien 87).
Castellon 1 (Raul 34). Att: 12,500.
Oviedo 1 (Bango 5), Barcelona 0. Att: 21,500.
Real Madrid 0, At Madrid 3 (Manolo 5, Juanito 30, Rodax 86). Att: 92,100.
Espanol 0, Gijon 2 (Luhovy 54, Jimenez 89). Att: 22,300.
Valencia 1 (Fernando 42pen), Osasuna 1 (Camarasa og 55). Att: 39,200.
Betis 1 (Ivanov 74), Bilbao 0. Att: 42,700.

Three to one ... Bogdan Krenzer and Suss appeal against Banach during Kalsrhne's 0-0 draw with Koln.

ALBANIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Flamurtari	18	12	3	3	23	8	27
Partizani	19	9	8	2	31	19	26
Vllaznia	18	8	7	3	25	19	23
Dinamo	18	8	6	4	32	18	22
Tomori	18	6	8	4	28	22	20
Apolonia	19	7	6	6	24	18	20
17 Nentori	19	7	5	7	26	21	19
Skenderbeu	19	5	8	6	25	24	18
Labinoti	19	6	6	7	12	15	18
Luftetari	19	6	3	10	16	26	25
Lokomotiva	19	3	8	8	10	18	14
Traktori	19	3	8	8	13	25	14
Besa	19	3	7	9	17	28	13
Kastrioti	19	3	7	9	17	38	13

BELGIUM

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Gent	19	13	5	1	41	18	31
Anderlecht	19	13	4	2	48	12	30
Brugge	19	10	7	2	29	16	27
Standard	19	10	7	2	31	19	27
Mechelen	19	10	6	3	35	19	26
Ekeren	19	8	5	6	36	28	21
Antwerp	19	6	9	4	35	27	21
Lokeren	19	8	4	7	26	22	20
Charleroi	19	6	9	5	20	18	19
FC Liege	19	5	7	7	22	23	17
Cercle	19	6	4	9	23	33	16
Genk	19	5	4	10	18	40	14
Waregem	19	4	6	9	17	29	14
Lierse	19	3	7	9	10	24	13
St Truiden	19	3	7	9	14	28	13
Kortrijk	19	4	3	12	20	35	11
Beerschot	19	4	3	12	23	42	11
Molenbeek	19	3	5	11	16	31	11

ENGLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
**Arsenal	23	15	8	0	42	10	51
Liverpool	22	15	5	2	42	17	50
Crystal Pal	23	13	6	4	33	23	45
Leeds Utd	23	12	6	5	38	24	42
*Man Utd	23	11	7	5	36	24	39
Tottenham	23	10	7	6	35	27	37
Wimbledon	23	8	8	7	35	32	32
Man City	22	8	8	6	32	30	32
Chelsea	23	9	5	9	36	40	32
Norwich	23	0	2	11	31	40	32
Nottm For	22	8	7	7	37	32	31
Everton	23	7	6	10	26	26	27
Southmptn	23	7	5	11	34	41	26
Aston Villa	22	5	9	8	21	22	24
Coventry	23	6	6	11	23	29	24
Luton	23	6	5	12	26	38	23
Sunderland	23	5	6	12	25	35	21
QPR	23	4	6	13	27	42	18
Derby Co	22	4	6	12	10	39	18
Sheff Utd	22	3	4	15	13	39	13

** 2 pts deducted; * 1 pt deducted

DENMARK – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brondby	26	17	8	1	50	16	42
B1903	26	10	11	5	44	27	31
Ikaast FS	26	11	8	7	38	27	30
Silkeborg IF	26	1	8	7	35	26	30
Frem	26	7	15	4	33	25	29
Lyngby	26	10	8	8	44	30	28
AGF Aarhus	26	9	10	7	31	25	28
OB Odense	26	9	9	8	32	28	27
Vejle	26	8	10	8	32	32	26
Aab Aalborg	26	8	10	8	32	34	26
Naestved IF	26	6	10	10	20	34	26
Herfolge	26	4	9	13	21	47	17
KB Copen	26	4	6	16	24	52	14
Viborg FF	26	5	4	17	19	52	14

FRANCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Marseille	22	15	3	4	43	18	33
Monaco	22	10	8	4	28	20	28
Auxerre	22	10	7	5	33	21	27
Montpellier	21	9	5	7	36	24	23
Caen	22	7	8	7	23	21	22
Lille	22	5	12	5	22	22	22
Cannes	22	7	8	7	18	18	22
Nantes	20	6	9	5	23	23	21
Metz	21	7	7	7	27	30	21
Lyon	21	8	5	8	22	29	21
Paris SG	20	7	6	7	29	28	20
Bordeaux	22	5	10	7	21	20	20
Sochaux	20	6	7	7	17	16	19
Brest	21	5	9	7	29	29	19
Nancy	21	6	7	8	23	37	19
Toulon	20	5	8	7	18	21	18
Nice	22	4	10	8	18	22	18
St Etienne	21	7	4	10	23	29	18
Rennes	22	5	8	9	16	29	18
Toulouse	22	4	9	9	17	29	17

Schuster ... helping Atletico Madrid to chase the title.

GREECE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olympiakos	15	9	6	0	37	11	24
Panathinaikos	15	9	4	1	29	9	24
AEK	15	7	3	5	23	9	17
Athinaikos	15	7	3	5	18	11	17
PAOK	15	9	2	4	24	17	17
OFI Crete	15	6	4	5	11	10	16
Apollon	15	6	4	5	22	23	16
Panionios	15	5	5	5	16	21	16
Aris	15	6	4	5	16	13	16
Iraklis	15	6	2	7	20	17	15
Panserraikos	15	4	5	6	13	14	13
Xanthi	15	5	3	7	21	25	13
Panachaiki	15	3	6	6	9	21	12
PAS Ioannina	15	4	4	7	7	16	12
Levadiakos	15	5	1	9	14	21	11
Doxa Drama	15	4	2	9	14	28	10
Ionikos	15	3	4	8	11	22	10
Larisa	15	1	4	10	9	24	6

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PSV	15	11	3	1	41	10	25
Ajax	14	9	5	0	37	8	23
Groningen	15	7	7	1	30	16	21
Den Haag	15	8	2	5	27	23	18
Fortuna	15	6	5	4	18	18	17
Vitesse	15	5	6	5	19	14	16
Utrecht	15	7	2	6	15	19	16
Roda	14	6	2	6	20	22	14
Feynoord	15	3	7	5	21	21	13
Willem II	15	5	3	7	25	26	13
RKC Waalwijk	15	4	5	6	19	23	13
Volendam	15	4	5	6	18	22	13
SVV	15	4	5	6	10	14	13
Sparta	15	3	7	5	19	31	13
Twente	15	4	4	7	15	19	12
MVV	15	4	3	8	18	31	11
NEC	15	2	7	6	11	28	11
Heerenveen	15	2	2	11	14	32	6

ITALY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Juventus	16	8	6	2	26	14	22
Inter	16	9	4	3	30	20	22
Milan	15	8	5	2	17	7	21
Parma	16	7	6	3	18	12	20
Sampdoria	15	7	5	3	22	12	19
Genoa	16	5	7	4	18	15	17
Torino	16	5	7	4	16	14	17
Lazio	16	2	12	2	13	12	16
Roma	15	5	5	5	22	19	15
Bari	16	4	7	5	19	20	15
Atalanta	16	4	7	5	17	20	15
Napoli	16	4	7	5	13	16	15
Lecce	16	4	7	5	8	13	15
Fiorentina	16	3	8	5	19	20	14
Pisa	15	5	2	8	18	28	12
Bologna	16	2	6	8	11	16	10
Cagliari	16	2	6	8	8	19	10
Cesena	16	2	5	9	14	30	9

FAROES – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
HB Torshavn	18	9	6	3	37	22	24
MB MidVagur	18	7	6	5	30	25	20
B36 Torshavn	18	9	2	7	30	27	20
VB Vagur	18	7	4	7	27	27	18
B68 Tottir	18	6	6	6	19	21	18
GL Golu	18	7	3	8	28	22	17
KL Klakksvik	18	6	5	7	30	36	17
TB Tvorovri	18	7	2	9	21	26	16
SIF Sandav	18	7	2	9	22	29	16
B71 Sandur	18	4	6	8	17	26	14

ICELAND – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fram Reijkavik	18	12	2	4	39	16	38
KR Rejkavik	18	12	2	4	31	17	38
IB Vestmann	18	11	4	3	39	32	37
Valur	18	10	3	5	29	21	33
Starjnan	18	8	2	8	25	27	26
FH Hafnarfjardar	18	7	2	9	24	29	23
Vikingur	18	4	7	7	17	24	19
KA Akureyri	18	5	1	12	18	28	16
Thor	18	4	3	11	13	24	15
IA Akranes	18	3	2	13	19	36	11

FINLAND – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	A	FPts
Kuusysi Lahti	22	14	5	3	34	12	33
Rops Rovaniemi	22	12	5	29	17	29	
HJK Helsinki	22	11	6	5	40	29	28
KUPS Kuopio	22	8	8	6	24	22	24
Reipas Lahti	22	7	9	6	35	21	23
TPS Turku	22	7	9	6	27	20	23
MP Mikkeli	22	6	11	5	20	22	23
V'kosken	22	8	6	8	27	34	22
Ilves Tampere	22	6	8	8	37	33	20
OTP Oulu	22	6	8	8	37	33	20
KPV Kokkola	22	6	3	13	15	32	15
Kuusankoski	22	1	7	14	13	43	9

Play-off final: HJK bt Kuusysi.

NORTHERN IRELAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Portadown	16	14	2	0	32	9	44
Glentoran	17	11	3	3	28	18	36
Newry	17	10	2	5	30	20	32
Glenavon	16	9	3	4	36	24	30
Bangor	16	9	3	4	25	16	30
Cliftonville	14	7	2	5	35	22	23
Crusaders	16	6	5	5	29	25	23
Linfield	17	6	5	6	25	26	23
Ards	16	6	4	6	25	23	22
Distillery	16	6	4	6	28	27	22
Omagh	16	5	2	9	28	32	17
Ballyclare	17	3	4	10	22	35	13
Ballymona	17	3	4	10	22	36	13
Larne	17	3	4	10	22	39	13
Carrick	16	3	2	11	18	32	11
Coleraine	17	1	3	13	18	39	6

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
St Patrick's	20	13	6	1	35	8	32
Cork City	21	11	9	1	26	11	31
Dundalk	19	12	4	3	31	15	28
Sligo	21	11	6	4	26	14	28
Shelbourne	21	10	5	6	40	19	25
Shamr'k Rov	21	9	6	6	34	23	24
Derry City	21	7	8	6	31	15	22
Bohemians	21	5	4	12	16	25	14
Galway	21	7	0	14	21	44	14
Athlone Twn	21	3	6	12	10	31	12
Waterfod	21	3	3	15	13	41	9
Limerick City	20	3	3	14	10	46	9

NORWAY – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rosenborg	22	13	5	4	60	24	44
Tromso	22	12	6	4	36	21	42
Molde	22	12	4	6	34	29	40
Brann	22	11	6	5	34	25	39
Viking Stavanger	22	10	5	7	41	30	35
S. Kristiansand	22	9	4	9	39	34	31
Fyllingen	22	7	7	8	23	30	28
Konigsvinger	22	7	6	9	24	32	27
Stromgodset	22	8	3	11	29	45	27
Lillestrom	22	7	4	11	30	30	25
VIF Fotball	22	4	4	14	26	53	16
Moss	22	3	4	15	24	47	13

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FC Porto	21	18	2	1	42	11	38
Benfica	21	17	3	1	45	12	37
Sporting	21	15	2	4	38	14	32
Boavista	21	11	5	5	32	22	27
Beira-Mar	21	7	7	7	25	24	21
Salgueiros	21	8	4	9	21	31	20
Gil Vicente	21	6	7	8	19	24	19
Uniao	21	5	10	6	17	22	19
Panafiel	21	7	5	9	20	31	19
Nacional	21	5	9	7	18	24	19
Guimaraes	20	5	8	7	16	19	18
Tirsense	21	5	8	8	20	24	18
Maritimo	21	7	4	10	21	27	18
Farense	21	7	4	10	19	25	18
Famalicao	21	6	6	9	15	21	18
Amadora	21	5	7	9	21	26	17
Setubal	21	5	7	9	24	26	17
Chaves	21	3	9	9	22	30	15
Braga	21	5	5	11	16	27	15
Belenenses	20	4	4	12	14	24	12

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	23	16	5	2	48	14	37
Aberdeen	23	11	8	4	36	20	30
Dundee U	22	12	5	5	32	18	29
St Johnstone	22	10	6	6	31	28	26
Celtic	22	7	6	9	27	29	20
Hearts	22	7	6	9	26	32	20
Dunfermline	21	5	7	9	22	32	17
Motherwell	21	4	7	10	27	31	15
St Mirren	23	4	6	13	18	39	14
Hibernian	23	3	8	12	11	35	14

SOVIET UNION – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
D.Kiev	24	14	6	4	44	20	34
CSKA Moscow	24	13	5	6	43	26	31
D.Moscow	24	12	7	5	27	24	31
T.Moscow	24	13	4	7	28	24	30
S.Moscow	24	12	5	7	39	26	29
Dniepr	24	11	6	7	39	26	28
Ararat Erevan	24	8	7	9	25	23	23
Donetsk	24	6	10	8	23	31	22
C'morets	24	8	3	13	23	29	19
Douchanbe	24	7	4	13	26	34	18
Kharkov	24	5	8	11	13	28	18
D. Minsk	24	6	3	15	20	34	15
Rotor Volgograd	24	4	6	14	14	39	14

SPAIN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	18	13	3	2	33	12	29
At.Madrid	18	9	7	2	25	10	25
Osasuna	17	8	7	2	22	12	23
Seville	18	9	3	6	21	14	21
Real Madrid	18	9	3	6	23	18	21
Logrones	17	8	4	5	14	12	20
Oviedo	17	6	7	4	13	18	19
Valencia	18	7	4	7	22	21	18
At.Bilbao	17	8	2	7	17	20	18
Burgos	18	5	7	6	14	11	17
Gijon	18	6	5	7	21	20	17
Zaragoza	18	6	5	7	20	21	17
Valladolid	18	4	8	6	19	18	16
Castellon	18	3	10	5	13	16	16
Espanol	18	5	5	8	17	17	15
R.Sociedad	18	4	7	7	14	22	15
Mallorca	18	4	6	8	16	23	14
Tenerife	18	5	3	10	17	34	13
Betis	18	3	6	9	17	29	12
Cadiz	18	2	6	10	12	22	10

SWEDEN – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
IFK Goteburg	22	14	3	5	39	22	45
IFK Norrkoping	22	12	4	6	41	23	40
Orebro SK	22	10	6	6	23	17	36
Oesters Vaxjo	22	10	6	6	28	27	36
Djurgaarden	22	9	6	7	37	23	33
Malmo FF	22	6	10	6	20	15	28
GAIS Goteburg	22	7	7	8	17	17	28
AIK Stockholm	22	6	3	11	25	39	27
Halmstad	22	7	5	10	27	34	26
IK Brage	22	5	9	8	23	26	24
Orgryte	22	6	3	13	22	40	21
Hammarby	22	5	4	13	32	51	19

Play-off final: IFK bt Norrkoping

SWITZERLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sion	22	10	10	2	31	20	29
Grasshoppers	22	9	9	4	29	17	27
N. Xamax	22	8	10	4	25	15	26
Lausanne	22	9	8	5	39	30	26
Lugano	22	8	9	5	27	22	25
Servette	22	9	6	7	30	27	24
Y.A. Bern	22	6	11	5	35	26	23
Lucerne	22	6	7	7	30	28	23

WEST GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Werder Bremen	17	10	4	3	24	13	24
Bayern Munich	17	9	5	3	39	19	23
K'lautern	16	9	4	3	32	22	22
Eintracht F'Furt	17	7	6	4	26	15	20
Borussia D.	17	7	6	4	21	20	20
Koln	16	7	4	5	23	12	18
Hamburg	16	8	2	6	23	18	18
Leverkusen	16	5	8	3	22	19	18
Fortuna	17	5	7	5	20	23	17
Bochum	17	5	6	6	24	23	16
Wattensheid	16	6	4	6	21	26	16
Stuttgart	17	5	4	8	22	27	14
Borussia Mg	17	3	8	6	21	29	14
Karlsruhe	16	4	5	7	22	29	13
Bayer Uerdingen	17	3	7	7	21	31	13
St Pauli	17	2	9	6	16	26	13
Nurnberg	16	3	4	9	18	30	10
Hertha Berlin	16	2	5	9	14	27	9

YUGOSLAVIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Red Star	18	13	3	2	39	11	29
Partizan	18	10	3	5	30	18	22
Dinamo	18	8	5	5	25	19	19
Proleter	18	9	2	7	25	22	19
Radnicki	18	8	4	6	18	22	19
Velez	18	8	3	6	25	23	18
Rijeka	18	7	5	6	18	11	16
Rad	18	6	4	8	21	17	16
Osijek	18	7	3	8	26	26	16
Vojvodina	18	8	1	9	25	30	16
Zemun	18	7	5	6	22	27	16
Buducnost	16	7	3	8	23	17	15
Olimpia	18	7	2	9	19	28	15
Borac	18	6	4	8	15	21	14
Sloboda	18	7	2	9	20	27	14
Zeljeznicar	18	5	7	6	18	20	13
Sarajevo	18	4	7	7	15	26	12
Hajduk	18	5	5	8	23	20	11
Spartak	18	1	8	9	9	31	4

INTERNATIONAL RESULTS

Flying high ... Voeller and Bein lead the German assault on Luxembourg during the European Championship qualifier.

Letting fly ... Poulsen of Denmark tries a shot at the Northern Ireland goal.

INTERNATIONAL RESULTS

Spanish style ... Carlos clashes with Ibro during Spain's 9-0 victory over Albania.

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP TABLES

GROUP 1:

30.05.90 Iceland v Albania 4-0
05.09.90 Iceland v France 1-0
26.09.90 Czechoslovakia v Iceland 1-0
10.10.90 Spain v Iceland 2-1
13.10.90 France v Czechoslovakia 2-1
14.11.90 Czechoslovakia v Spain 3-2
17.11.90 Albania v France 0-1
19.12.90 Spain v Albania 9-0
20.02.91 France v Spain
30.03.91 France v Albania
01.05.91 Albania v Czechoslovakia
26.05.91 Albania v Iceland
05.06.91 Iceland v Czechoslovakia
04.09.91 Czechoslovakia v France
25.09.91 Iceland v Spain
12.10.91 Spain v France
16.10.91 Czechoslovakia v Albania
13.11.91 Spain v Czechoslovakia
13/20.11.91 France v Iceland
18.12.91 Albania v Spain

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France	3	3	0	0	5	2	6
Spain	3	2	0	1	13	4	4
Czechoslovakia	3	2	0	1	5	4	4
Iceland	4	1	0	3	4	5	2
Albania	3	0	0	3	0	12	0

GROUP 2:

12.09.90 Switzerland v Bulgaria 2-0
12.09.90 Scotland v Romania 2-1
17.10.90 Romania v Bulgaria 0-4
17.10.90 Scotland v Switzerland 2-1
14.11.90 Bulgaria v Scotland 1-1
14.11.90 San Marino v Switzerland 0-4
05.12.90 Romania v San Marino 6-0
27.03.91 Scotland v Bulgaria
27.03.91 San Marino v Romania
03.04.91 Switzerland v Romania
01.05.91 Bulgaria v Switzerland
01.05.91 San Marino v Scotland
22.05.91 San Marino v Bulgaria
05.06.91 Switzerland v San Marino
11.09.91 Switzerland v Scotland
16.10.91 Bulgaria v San Marino
16.10.91 Romania v Scotland
13.11.91 Scotland v San Marino
13.11.91 Romania v Switzerland
20.11.91 Bulgaria v Romania

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Scotland	3	2	1	0	5	3	5
Switzerland	3	2	0	1	7	2	4
Bulgaria	3	1	1	1	4	3	3
Romania	3	1	0	2	7	6	2
San Marino	2	0	0	2	0	10	0

GROUP 3:

12.09.90 USSR v Norway 2-0
10.10.90 Norway v Hungary 0-0
17.10.90 Hungary v Italy 1-1
31.10.90 Hungary v Cyprus 4-2
28.11.90 Italy v USSR 0-0
14.11.90 Cyprus v Norway 0-4
22.12.90 Cyprus v Italy 0-4
03.04.91 Cyprus v Hungary
17.04.91 Hungary v USSR
01.05.91 Italy v Hungary
01.05.91 Norway v Cyprus
29.05.91 USSR v Cyprus
05.06.91 Norway v Italy
28.08.91 Norway v USSR
25.09.91 USSR v Hungary
12.10.91 USSR v Italy
30.10.91 Hungary v Norway
13.11.91 Italy v Norway
13.11.91 Cyprus v USSR
21.12.91 Italy v Cyprus

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	3	1	2	0	5	1	4
Hungary	3	1	2	0	5	3	4
Soviet Union	2	1	1	0	2	0	3
Norway	3	1	1	1	3	2	3
Cyprus	3	0	0	3	2	11	0

GROUP 4:

12.09.90 N.Ireland v Yugoslavia 0-2
12.09.90 Faroe Islands v Austria 1-0
10.10.90 Denmark v Faroe Islands 4-1
17.10.90 N.Ireland v Denmark 1-1
31.10.90 Yugoslavia v Austria 4-1
14.11.90 Denmark v Yugoslavia 0-2
14.11.90 Austria v N.Ireland 0-0
27.03.91 Yugoslavia v N.Ireland
01.05.91 Yugoslavia v Denmark
01.05.91 N.Ireland v Faroe Islands
15.05.91 Austria v Faroe Islands
05.06.91 Denmark v Austria
11.09.91 Faroe Islands v N.Ireland
25.09.91 Faroe Islands v Denmark
09.10.91 Austria v Denmark
16.10.91 Faroe Islands v Yugoslavia
16.10.91 N.Ireland v Austria
13.11.91 Denmark v N.Ireland
13.11.91 Austria v Yugoslavia

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Yugoslavia	3	3	0	0	8	1	6
Denmark	3	1	1	1	5	4	3
Faroe Islands	2	1	0	1	2	4	2
N.Ireland	3	0	2	1	1	3	2
Austria	3	0	1	2	1	5	1

GROUP 5:

17.10.90 Wales v Belgium 3-1
31.10.90 Luxembourg v Germany 2-4
14.11.90 Luxembourg v Wales 0-1
27.03.91 Belgium v Luxembourg
27.03.91 Belgium v Wales
01.05.91 Germany v Belgium
05.06.91 Wales v Germany
11.09.91 Luxembourg v Belgium
16.10.91 Germany v Wales
13.11.91 Wales v Luxembourg
20.11.91 Belgium v Germany
11.12.91 Germany v Luxembourg

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wales	3	2	0	0	4	1	4
Germany	3	1	0	2	6	2	2
Luxembourg	3	0	0	3	2	4	0
Belgium	1	0	0	1	1	3	0

GROUP 6:

12.09.90 Finland v Portugal 0-0
17.10.90 Portugal v Holland 1-0
31.10.90 Greece v Malta 4-0
21.11.90 Holland v Greece 2-0
25.11.90 Malta v Finland 2-2
19.12.90 Malta v Holland 0-8
23.01.91 Greece v Portugal
09.02.91 Malta v Portugal
20.02.91 Portugal v Malta
13.03.91 Holland v Malta
17.04.91 Holland v Finland
16.05.91 Finland v Malta
05.06.91 Finland v Holland
11.09.91 Portugal v Finland
09.10.91 Finland v Greece
16.10.91 Holland v Portugal
30.10.91 Greece v Finland
20.11.91 Portugal v Greece
04.12.91 Greece v Holland
22.12.91 Malta v Greece

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Holland	3	2	0	1	10	1	4
Portugal	2	1	1	0	1	0	3
Greece	2	1	0	1	4	2	2
Finland	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
Malta	3	0	1	2	2	14	1

GROUP 7:

17.10.90 England v Poland 2-0
17.10.90 Rep.of Ireland v Turkey 5-0
14.11.90 Rep.of Ireland v England 1-1
14.11.90 Turkey v Poland 0-1
27.03.91 England v Rep.of Ireland
17.04.91 Poland v Turkey
01.05.91 Turkey v England
01.05.91 Rep.of Ireland v Poland
16.10.91 Poland v Rep.of Ireland
16.10.91 England v Turkey
13.11.91 Turkey v Rep.of Ireland
13.11.91 Poland v England

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rep.of Ireland	2	1	1	0	6	1	3
England	2	1	1	0	3	1	3
Poland	2	1	0	1	1	2	2
Turkey	2	0	0	2	0	6	0

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 21
Nov 21 = Port of Spain (Trinidad) – intl friendly
United States 0
Soviet Union 0
Att: 6,000. **Ref:** Stewart (TT)
US: Dodd – Armstrong, Balboa, Banks, Eck (Murray 46) – Fraser, Krumpe, Windischmann (Daven 85) – Kinnear, Clavajo (Eichmann 75), Vermes (Bliss 75).
Sov Union: Uvarov – Chernikov, Tsveiba (D Kuznetsov), Moch, Konchelski – Kulkov, Shalimov (Tatarchuk 46), Dobrovolski, Mostovoi (Perepadenko 46) – Kolyvanov (Getsko 46), Yuran (Radchenko 46).

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30
Nov 30 = Guatemala City – intl friendly
Guatemala 0
Sov Union 3 (Mostovoi 17, Dobrovolski 20, Kolyvanov 45)
HT: 0-3. Att: 20,000. **Ref:** Chichilia (Gua)
Guatemala: R Perez (Chuga 46) – Varanes (Mendes 46), Bateis (Zamora 46), Contreras, Seselvedo – Leon, H Perez, Castendo, Westfall (Ortega 46) – Chacon (Arias 46), Rodas.
Sov Union: Cherchesov – Chernikov, Tsveiba, Moch, D Kuznetsov (Sudelnikov 46) – Kulkov (Getsko 46), Shalimov, Perepadenko, Dobrovolski – Mostovoi (Gallamin 29), Yuran (Kolyvanov 29).

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12
Dec 12 = Casablanca
Morocco 0
Senegal 0
Att: 11,000. **Ref:** Hansal (Alg)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13
Dec 13 = Los Angeles – intl friendly
Mexico 0
Brazil 0
Att: 25,000. **Ref:** Jay (US)
Mexico: Larios – Juan Hernandez, Victor Rodriguez, Roberto Ruiz Esparza, Hector Esparza, Munoz, Espana (De la Torre 67), Bernal, Pelaez (Farfan 72), Flores (F J Cruz 59), Alvez.
Brazil: Sergio – Gil Baiano (Odair 84), Paulao (Marcio 34), Adilson, Moacir, Lira, Careca II (Almir 76), Edu, Joao Santos, Marquinhos (Gerson 84), Mazinho II.
For a fourth successive match since the World Cup flop, Brazil failed to score and failed, also, to win. Mexico, playing what is considered a home match despite the Los Angeles venue, had the better of the first half and might have gone ahead in the 24th minute when a long shot by Alvez sailed just over the bar with Sergio way out of goal. Brazil improved in the second half. Mazinho II wasted their best chance, shooting wide of an open goal after 73 minutes.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19
Dec 19 = Valletta – EC gp 3
Malta 0
Holland 8 (Marco Van Basten 10, 20, 25, 68, 80pen, Winter 51) Bergkamp 58, 70
HT: 0-3. Att: 11,000. **Ref:** Blattman (Swz)
Malta: Cluett – Edwin Camilleri (Suda 46), Joe Camilleri, Galea, Laferla, Silvio Vella, Carabott, Degiorgio, Charles Scerri (Zerafa 70), Busuttil, Raymond Vella.
Holland: Van Breukelen – Blind, De Jong, E Koeman (Winter 46), Frank De Boer, Wouters, Van't Schip, Gullit (Van der Brom 71), Van Basten, Rov Bergkamp.
Marco Van Basten found the goal-scoring form which had deserted him during the World Cup finals as Holland subjected Malta to their worst-ever home defeat. With Ruud Gullit and Bryan Roy stretching the Maltese defence wide on the wings, Van Basten took advantage to complete a hat-trick in 25 minutes. The first followed a free kick after Roy had been fouled near the corner flag. Van Basten's second followed a defensive misunderstanding while his third was a beauty – as he took as pass from Gullit on his chest before beating keeper Cluett with an overhead shot. Gullit made No 4 after the break for Aron Winter and, inbetween Danny Bergkamp's two goals, Van Basten scored twice more himself – his fifth of the game coming from the penalty spot after substitute Van der Brom was pulled down.

Dec 19 = Seville/Sanchez Pizjuan – EC gp 1
Spain 9 (Guillermo Amor 9, Carlos 22, 63, Butragueno 30, 57, 66 75, Fernando Hierro 37, Jose Maria Baquero 86
Albania 0
HT: 4-0. Att: 27,600. **Ref:** Constantin (Bel)
Spain: Zubizarreta – Sanchis, Alcorta, Juan Goicoechea (Baquero 75), Hierro, Amor, Manolo, Michel (E Flores 62), Butragueno, Martin Vazquez, Carlos.
Albania: Arapi – Ibro, Lekbello, Stafa, Demollari (Kola 38), Kushta, Millo, Dema (Mollari 39), Ferko, Zmijani, Tahiri.
Emilio Butragueno's four-goal haul turned him into Spain's all-time top as his international tally rose from 23 goals to 27 – one more than Alfredo Di Stefano. Now his club boss at Real Madrid, Di Stefano congratulated Butragueno by saying: "I'm delighted for him. I'm not greedy for records and he has got the record now even though he is not greedy for goals." Michel Platini, manager of the French team Spain face next on February 20, was among the crowd which saw Spain seize control of the game – after a shaky start when Albania might have scored – thanks to the midfield skills of Juan Goicoechea. He had a hand in all Spain's first three goals.

Dec 19 = Stuttgart – intl friendly
Germany 4 (Rudi Voller 1, Karl-Heinz Riedle 67, Andreas Thom 75 Lothar Matthaus 85
Switzerland 0
HT: 1-0. Att: 20,000. **Ref:** Longhi (It)
Germany: Illgner – Berthold, Kohler, Buchwald, Reuter, Hassler, Matthaus, Sammer (Thom 74), Helmer, Klinsmann, Voller (Riedle 46).
Switzerland: Brunner (Walker 46) – Geiger, Herr, Egli, Hottiger, Beat Sutter, Koller (Schepull 77), Hermann, Knup, Turkyilmaz, Chapuisat (Chassot 69).
Germany lined up a team representing a united country for the first time since 1942 and were duly rewarded with an easy victory. This was the match hastily arranged to substitute the Unification Match between East and West Germany which had been cancelled in November for fear of hooligan trouble. The significance of the opposition on this occasion was that Switzerland had faced the 'new' West Germany in their first post-war match in 1950. German boss Berti Vogts had inclued five East German internationals in his squad; Matthias Sammer lined up from the start while Andreas Thom appeared as a goal-scoring second half substitute. Germany made a superb start with Voller converting a Jurgen Klinsmann pass after only 28 seconds. Switzerland quickly closed ranks and might have scored twice before half-time. First Turkyilmaz was foiled on a breakthrough by the advancing Illgner. Then an Andy Egli header appeared to cross the goal-line before it was hooked away by Kohler. Despite Swiss protests, Italian referee Carlo Longhi waved play on. Substitute Swiss keeper Philipp Walker became an instant hero with a 55th-minute penalty stop from Klinsmann. But he was beaten soon after when Voller's substitute, Riedle, headed home from close range after a move constructed by Hassler and Matthaus. Thom arrived in time to claim goal No 3 and Matthaus shot the fourth after seizing on a cross from Internazionale club-mate Klinsmann.

Dec 19 = Volos – intl friendly
Greece 1 (Yotis Tsaluhidis 8)
Poland 2 (Soczynski 35, Gebura 66)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 7,000.
Greece: Sarganis – Karageorgiu, Karatidis, Manolas, Kurbanas – Tsaluhidis, Saravakos, Kondis, Karasavidis (Borbokis 56), Atanasiadis, Tsiantakis.
Poland: Wandzik (Sidorczuk 6) – Kubicki (Lesniak 46), Szewczyk, Czachowski, Jakolczewicz – Nawrocki, R Warzycha, Zejer, Soczynski – Kosecki, Cebula (Grzesik 82).
Greece went ahead after only eight minutes through Tsaluhidis in a match which was a European championship warm-up for both line-ups. Soczynski equalised before half-time and Gebura shot the winner after a Roman Kosecki drive had rebounded off a post. Poland hit the post again ten minutes from time.

Dec 19 = Oporto/Maia – intl friendly
Portugal 1 (Domingos 8)
United States 0
HT: 1-0. Att: 2,000. **Ref:** Ramos (Sp)
Portugal: Silvino (Vitor Baia 46) – Joao Pinto, Leal, Venancio, Fernando Couto, Semedo, Vitor Paneira (Jorge Couto 67), Rui Barros, Domingos (Nelo 67), Futre, Andre.
US: Meola – Armstrong, Balboa, Dayak, Banks, Caligiuri, Ramos, Fraser (Henderson 46), Kinnear, Stewart, Vermes.
Tony Meola was the busiest American on the pitch but it was his midjudgment of a chipped through ball from Semedo which presented Domingos Oliveira with an eighth-minute goal which proved decisive. Portugal's most dangerous forward was Vitor Paneira, who once forced a finbe one-handed save from Meola after 32 minutes. Dayak, Armstrong and Banks kept a close watch on Portugal strikers Barros and Futre while debutant Fernando Couto was the pick of the home defenders.

Dec 19 = Constantine – intl friendly
Algeria 1 (Haraoui 65)
Senegal 0
HT: 0-0. Att: 12,000.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22
Dec 22 = Limassol – EC gp 3
Cyprus 0
Italy 4 (Pietro Vierchowod 14, Aldo Serena 22, 51, Attilio Lombardo 42
HT: 0-3. Att: 10,000. **Ref:** Gregr (Cz)
Cyprus: Onisiforu – Kalotheu, Miamiliotis, Christodolu, Socratous, Yiangudakis, Punnas, Savva (G Constantinou 56), Tsolakis, Nicolau, Papavasiliu (Xiuruppas 64).
Italy: Zenga – Bergomi, Ferrara, Eranio, Vierchowod, Crippa, Lombardo, Berti, Schillaci, Marocchi, Serena.
Attilio Lombardo, deputising for injured Sampdoria club-mate Gianluca Vialli, scored on his international debut as Italy collected the comfortable victory which took them to the top of the group. Once the early enthusiast flurry of the Cypriots had blown itself out, Italy dominated despite the further injury absences of sweeper Franco Baresi and forward Roberto Baggio. They took the lead when defender Vierchowod headed home a Marocchi free kick after 14 minutes. Another header, this time by Serena to a Ferrara cross, provided goal No 2, and Lombardo made it 3-0 shortly before the interval with a shot from the edge of the penalty box. In the second half Italy eased off after Serena scored a fourth goal.

AFRICA UDEAC CUP (played in Congo)
Group A: Congo 3 (Bakana, Ngapy pen, Guelor), Chad 0; Chad 1 (Samba), Equatorial Guinea 0; Congo 6 (Ngapy 3, Bakana 2 Ngatsono), Eq Guinea 0. Group B: Cameroon 2 (Bolemen, Ebwelle), Gabon 1 (Angoue); Gabon 1 (Minko), Central Africa Republic 0 Cameroon 3 (Ebwelle, Barga, Dank), CAR 0.
Semi-finals: Cameroon 1 (Bebey), Chad 0 after extra time; Congo 1 (Ngapy), Gabon 0.
Third place match: Chad 2 (Biba, Ndorami), Gabon 1 (Ondo).

Final:
Congo 2 (Ngapy, Makia)
Cameroon 1 (Ebwelle)
Att: 25,000.
Cameroon paid for the absence of their 'foreigners' as they lost their grip on the UDEAC Cup.

EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN CUP (in Tanzania)
Group A: Tanzania 0, Zanzibar 0; Malawi 0, Zimbabwe 0; Malawi 1, Tanzania 0; Zimbabwe 1, Zanzibar 0. Group B: Uganda 2, Kenya 2; Sudan 2, Kenya 1.
Third place match: Zanzibar 1, Tanzania 2.

Final:
Uganda 2 (Simbwa 34, Musisi 84)
Sudan 0
HT: 1-0.
Uganda collected their fifth victory in the 18-year history of the competition.

OTHER MATCHES
Dec 5: England U21 0, Wales U21 0.
Dec 18: England XI 4, Italia '90 XI 0 (Shilton testimonial/White Hart Lane, London).

NEHRU CUP
Trivandrum: Soviet Union 4, Zambia 0; India 0, Romania 3
Hungary 1, Soviet Union 1; Zambia 0, China 0.

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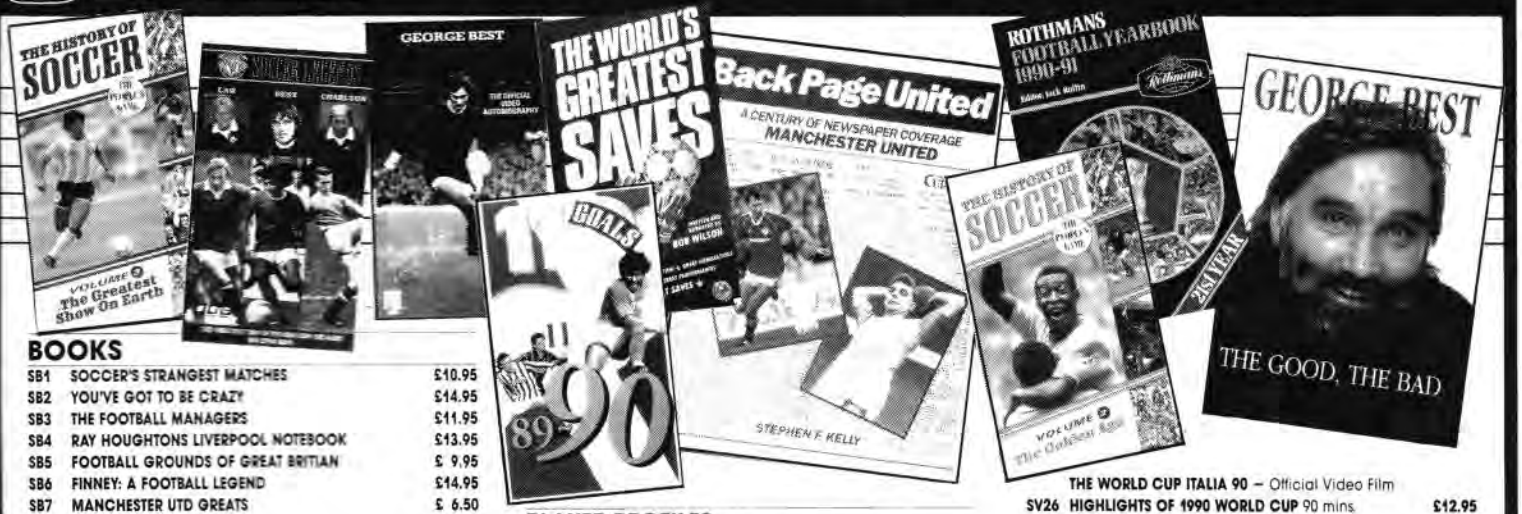

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Why Villa had to keep Stas on ice

ONE of the strangest signings in the Football League this season, and one of the most controversial, is that of Ivo Stas for Aston Villa from the Czech club, Banik Ostrava.

Although he was signed by Villa in November, more than two months passed with no sign of Stas in the team.

The explanation was that he got a calf injury in his first training session, and the injury proved worse than first thought.

Then the Professional Footballers' Association launched a scathing attack on the signing, claiming that Villa had given false details of the transaction.

These were hastily denied. Villa secretary Steve Stride pointed out that they had to fill in Department of Employment forms before the transfer which required information on the size of fee that Villa were to pay for Stas.

This was put down to £400,000, but Villa then discovered that Banik needed cash as soon as possible so they accepted between £250,000 and £300,000.

They were happy and Villa were happy – but not the PFA, who are against the current trend of clubs snapping up continentals at the expense of home-grown stars.

Villa's manager, Jozef Venglos, who is always the diplomat, said: "I can fully appreciate the PFA's feelings, but we are talking about a player of international class.

"My only concern is that I now have a player who I believe will strengthen my squad. I would not have signed Stas otherwise."

Stas played against Villa in two UEFA games earlier in the season, and made a good impression.

It doesn't take a mind-reader to come to the conclusion that he has been acquired eventually to take over from Paul McGrath, again troubled by knee problems.

Stas has won only two full caps but has a wealth of experience which Villa hope will be of benefit in the months to come.

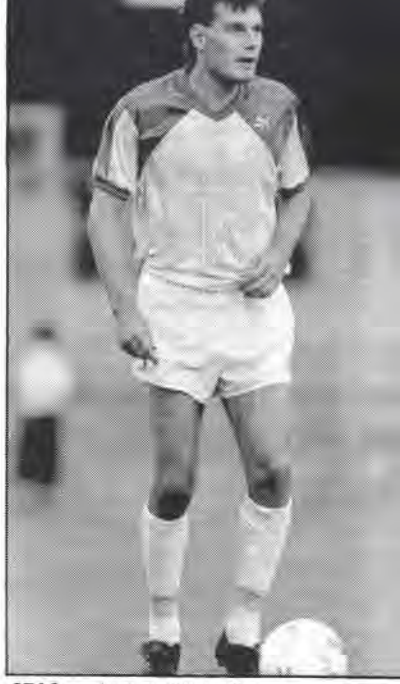
His contract takes him to the end of the 1992-93 season and he has an option of a further two years. But this will depend a great deal upon whether Venglos remains at Villa Park for this entire period.

Stas now has his family with him in Birmingham, and is looking forward to life in the First Division.

He said: "Villa are a great club with great traditions. They also have a lot of good players who are well known on the continent.

"David Platt, Paul McGrath and Tony Cascarino all impressed in the World Cup, while Nigel Spink and Gordon Cowans have shown they are top quality."

BRIAN MARSHALL



STAS . . . he is a player of international class, says his manager.

MURDO SHINES IN THE GLOOM

BY ALAN FAIRLEY

EASTER ROAD Stadium in Edinburgh, home of Hibernian F.C., is now one of Scottish football's most depressing arenas.

It's set amid the darkened tenements of the city's East End, overlooked by the natural landscape of Arthur's Seat, but even the imposing shadow of this revered landmark pales into insignificance when compared with the murky cloud of despair over the club.

MACLEOD . . . using his vast experience in an attempt to help Hibs out of their bad spell.

After escaping a hostile takeover bid last summer by Wallace Mercer, chairman of city rivals Hearts, Hibs made an ominously poor start to 1991/92.

A record of ten goals in their first 20 matches contributed to the club's present unfortunate status as the Premier League's relegation favourites.

Amid the gloom and despondency however, the performances of Murdo MacLeod have shone through, providing a glimmer of optimism for the longsuffering supporters.

MacLeod joined Hibs from West German Bundesliga side Borussia Dortmund at the beginning of the season, combining his on-field responsibilities with additional duties as assistant manager in preparation for what he hopes will be a career in football management.

"When I came back from Germany there were a number of good offers on the table'" he says. "Dunfermline, for instance, made me an exceptional financial proposition, but Hibs were prepared to give me the opportunity to learn the managerial side and, at the age of 33, I decided it was time to look to the future.

"Having said that, I've got a few good years left in me from a playing point of view and I've no intention of hanging my boots up too early.

"I've seen too many players take that step, then spend the rest of their lives regretting it."

MacLeod, a schoolboy sensation in his native Glasgow (I recall playing against him a in a Boys Brigade league circa. 1967), signed for Dumbarton in 1974 and moved to Celtic four years later.

Regular

He won several domestic honours, including four league championship medals, in his nine years at Parkhead, and gained his first full cap in the 1-0 Rous Cup victory over England at Hampden in 1985.

Since then he has been a regular member of the Scotland squad and took part in the World Cup last year in Italy.

His years with Borussia Dortmund in the Bundesliga helped his development at international level and he is now concentrating on utilising his vast experience towards helping Hibs out of their current predicament.

Many see MacLeod as the one man capable of changing this once dominant club's on-field fortunes. It is an awesome responsibility.

BONNER HITS NEW HIGH

BY SEAN CREEDON

PADDY BONNER will equal Alan Kelly's record as most capped Republic of Ireland goalkeeper if he plays in the friendly against Wales in Wrexham on February 6th.

Kelly won his 47 caps between November 1956 and June 1973. Bonner is set to equal that after only ten years. But Ireland now play more games than they did in the fifties and sixties, and now qualify for major tournaments.

Celtic's Bonner, who made his debut against Poland on May 24, 1981 – his 21st birthday – was not a regular first choice until Jack Charlton took over five years ago this month.

He is now a folk hero in Ireland after his penalty save from Romania's Timofte in Genoa last June, was voted Texaco Player of the Year, and is due a testimonial at Parkhead at the end of the season.

There has been a 45 per cent increase in the number of people playing soccer in the Republic over the past four years. The greatest increase has been in the Munster area where the number of participants has increased by 150 per cent.

There are now 124,605 people playing soccer for 7,022 teams. The increase is directly attributed to the success of the national team.

Six of the ten non-League clubs got home draws in the first round of the FAI Harp Lager Cup. Middleton from Cork drew Cup-holders Bray Wanderers at home.

Dublin junior club St Francis, who went all the way to the final last year, didn't make the first round this time. None of the ten clubs who qualified for the first round in 1990 got through

ELLIOTT . . . Celtic's best player despite a dispute over his contract.

CELTIC SLIDE GATHERS PACE

THE halfway stage in the Scottish domestic season passed with one main talking point: Celtic's inability to present even a token challenge to city rivals Rangers.

Celtic's 2-0 defeat at Ibrox in the traditional New Year derby fixture left them trailing by an unprecedented 14 points, worsening the feeling of unrest prevalent among their fans since the season began.

Much of the blame for the Parkhead predicament must lie with the ineffectuality of their big-money close-season signings, Martin Hayes, Charlie Nicholas and John Collins.

Doubts

Hayes has made only sporadic appearances while Nicholas's anticipated return to his former status has failed to materialise, due mainly to a succession of niggling injury problems.

Collins has been unable to formulate the dynamic midfield partnership with Paul McStay that everyone had expected, and the manner in which he was marked out of the derby game by Terry Hurlock cast doubts as to the justification of the £1m fee Celtic paid Hibs.

Ongoing rumours of disharmony in the Parkhead boardroom do little to ease the frustrations, and the ultimate irony lies in the fact that the team's best player this season, Paul Elliott, is currently in the midst of a legal dispute with the club concerning an alleged breach of contract.

With Celtic out of the running, most observers have been looking to Aberdeen as the side most likely to chase Rangers and to prevent the title race from becoming a one-horse contest.

But a home defeat by North East rivals Dundee United virtually handed the league flag to Rangers, pressing on without mercy in a relentless drive towards the championship.

The strength in depth at Rangers has been aptly illustrated by their ability to overcome injury difficulties, as shown when 19-year-old Sandy Robertson stepped in to take over in midfield from Trevor Steven, reputed to be the highest-paid footballer in Britain.

Robertson, who was signed for Rangers by Jock Wallace as a 15-year-old, has shown some superb touches during his first-team outings, indicating that Rangers are not solely reliant on the chequebook to generate success.

NICHOLAS . . . his return has been marred by a series of injuries.

the qualifying stages this year.

Premier Division clubs St Patrick's Athletic and Derry City meet at Harold's Cross. The first-round games are due on March 10, with the final at Lansdowne Road on May 12.

The Premier Division of the League of Ireland has now opened up into a potential five-horse race. Dundalk, Shelbourne and Sligo Rovers have joined early leaders St Patrick's Athletic and Cork City at the top.

Reigning champions St Patrick's, who will play their 1,000th League game this month, are favourites to retain their title.

Waterford United and Limerick City look like relegation certainties.

Family

Alfie Hale has replaced Shamie Coad as Waterford manager. Hale's nephew Richie, who recently made his debut, became the tenth member of the family to play for The Blues.

Shamrock manager Noel King has been banned from the dugout for three months following his criticism of referees in the League of Ireland.

King, who has signed a new three-year contract with Rovers, will not be seeking the new post of full-time FAI coach. He is the present national coach in the Republic, but only on a part-time basis.

BONNER . . . making THAT penalty save against Romania during the World Cup.

BACK ROW L-R – Mark Walters, Neale Cooper, Richard Gough, Bonni Ginzburg, Chris Woods, Scott Nisbett, Mark Hateley, Ally McCoist.
MIDDLE ROW L-R – George Souter (kit man), Davie Dodds (player coach), Tom Cowan, Pieter Huistra, Gary Stevens, John Brown, Nigel Spackman, Terry Hurlock, Stuart Munro, John McGregor (coach), Jimmy Bell (kit man).
FRONT ROW L-R – Walter Smith (assist. man), Chris Vinnicombe, Ian Durrant, Terry Butcher (now Coventry), Graeme Souness (manager), Mo Johnston, Trevor Steven, Ian Ferguson, Phil Boersma (coach).

RANGERS